

Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP)

Regulation Information

A teacher improvement plan (TIP) is a component of the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). Section 100.2.(o) (4) of the Commissioner's Regulation, describes the TIP as follows:

Teacher Improvement. The plan shall describe how the school district or BOCES addresses the performance of teachers whose performance is evaluated as unsatisfactory, and shall require the development of a teacher improvement plan for teachers so evaluated, which shall be developed by the district or BOCES in consultation with such teacher.

Key APPR Requirements

- ◆ The performance of all professional staff, including probationary and tenured teachers and supplementary school personnel, if applicable (teacher aides and assistants) must be evaluated at least annually. (Except evening school teachers of adults enrolled in nonacademic, vocational subjects.)
- ◆ School districts or BOCES must include in its APPR plan criteria for:
 - ◆ Evaluation of teachers providing instructional services including at a minimum the following topics: content knowledge, preparation, instructional delivery, classroom management, student development, student assessment, collaboration, and reflective and responsive practice.
 - ◆ Criteria for evaluation of teachers providing pupil personnel services.
 - ◆ The levels of proficiency and evidence required for satisfactory performance in each district and BOCES.
- ◆ The procedures used in the APPR for formal performance review are a mandatory subject of collective bargaining according to Article 14 of Civil Service Law.
- ◆ The APPR plan must address the performance expected of all professional personnel.
- ◆ The district or BOCES is required to report annually to the State Education Department (SED) the efforts undertaken to address the performance of teachers whose performance is evaluated as unsatisfactory, including information related to the implementation of teacher improvement plans (TIP) for teachers so evaluated.
- ◆ A Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP) is written as a recommendation or plan of action to help a teacher found to have unsatisfactory performance as defined in the APPR plan.
- ◆ TIPs are to be developed by the district or BOCES **in consultation with** the teacher found to have unsatisfactory performance.

Advice to Local Leaders

1. When a teacher receives a rating of unsatisfactory performance and a TIP, the teacher will likely be upset and defensive. If the person is also non-tenured, the teacher may be fearful of loss of employment. Your role as union leader is to support the teacher, confirm if the process used in development of TIP follows your APPR and your contract, and help the teacher identify facts and solutions.
2. If you determine that TIP is being used inappropriately by an evaluator as a disciplinary tool, documentation for termination, or a warning, contact your LRS for guidance on next steps.
3. The district is responsible for providing help to the teacher who has a TIP. The employee should be involved with the evaluator in the identification of the activities to remediate the areas of unsatisfactory performance. Consultation implies a level of mutual respect.
4. Development of a TIP should be a helpful, professional conversation, identifying solutions and resources that will HELP the teacher. TIP consultation meetings should not be adversarial or be used as a negotiation tool.
5. The procedures for the Annual Professional Performance Review are a mandatory subject of collective bargaining. Therefore, the contract can stipulate that a union representative accompany the person with unsatisfactory rating to the TIP meetings.
6. There is no recommended template for a TIP in the APPR regulation. Each district or BOCES defines its own TIP form and process in the district APPR plan.
7. A good TIP may include the following:
 - a. Identification of the specific behavior to be changed
 - b. The link to the criteria in the district or BOCES APPR plan.
 - What does the teacher have to change?
 - What evidence will demonstrate that the teacher has changed?
 - c. A timeline for accomplishing the change, with intermediate benchmarks.
 - d. A statement of what the teacher agrees to do to make the required change.
 - e. A statement of who will support the teacher and monitor progress in the change effort.
 - f. Identification of multiple resources to help the teacher.
 - Resources can include mentors, district Professional Development Plan, Teacher Centers, BOCES, Higher Education Institutions, personal counselors, employee assistance programs, and medical referrals and others.
 - g. Release time for courses, workshops and observation.
 - h. Signatures by the teacher and district representative indicating agreement.
8. If a TIP is used as a threat or as a disciplinary tool by a district representative, the employee should immediately contact the local president to identify options. Local presidents should ensure that building representatives know who has been identified as needing to participate in the TIP process.
9. The failure of districts to provide TIPs for non-tenured teachers with unsatisfactory performance has resulted in some cases of an additional July year. See your LRS.