

## **KPBSD Professional Development Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)**

### **1. Why did the District purchase Avatar Professional Development Management Software?**

The Avatar software was purchased to streamline and improve efficiency of professional development district wide. The software allows the district to advertise district-sponsored opportunities, enroll participants online, track attendance, and document and report on professional development opportunities.

The district's professional development management software allows all district-sponsored learning opportunities to be posted online. School district personnel have twenty-four hour access to the online catalog where they can register for district-sponsored classes, workshops, seminars, and web-based learning events. The software provides comprehensive attendance management, credit tracking, waiting list, and cancellation management. Email notifications and reminders of enrollment are automatically generated and sent to each participant. Continuous online access to individual portfolios including course transcripts and certificates of completion are available. Comprehensive learner, supervisor, and administrator reports can be produced with this software program.

The professional development management software is also instrumental in the evaluation of the courses offered to KPBSD staff. Online surveys/evaluations for each professional development opportunity are generated and each participant completes it at the conclusion of the course. Results are then compiled to determine the effectiveness of the presenter(s) and the value of the course.

### **2. What courses will be posted in the software catalog?**

Only courses sponsored by KPBSD will be posted in the catalog. Some examples of courses that the district has offered and that participants could enroll in online utilizing the software are Co-Teaching, Lexia, Read Naturally, Science Curriculum Implementation Workshop, Handwriting without Tears, and Failure is Not an Option.

### **3. Do I need my administrator's approval to register for a course?**

If the course offered occurs during the contract day, you will need your administrator's approval. He/she will need to approve your leave from the building prior to your enrollment. The majority of district-sponsored professional development opportunities occur during the school day.

#### **4. Is Avatar for certified and classified personnel?**

This system is set up to manage professional development for certified personnel employed in certified positions.

#### **5. How do I earn the Certificate of Completion?**

In order to earn the Certificate of Completion, you need to be in attendance during the whole course/training. You will also need to complete the online post evaluation.

#### **6. Can the Certificate of Completion be used for recertification?**

Currently, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development requires that teachers renewing a regular five-year certificate have six semester hours of credit from a regionally accredited college. Three of those hours need to be upper division or graduate level credit.

The State will allow substitution of up to three continuing education units (CEUs) for three of the six semester credits. The CEUs cannot replace the three semester credits of upper division or graduate level credit and they must be related to the endorsement area on the certificate being renewed.

In order to get one continuing education unit, an individual must complete 15 contact hours at a single professional development event. A participant needs to submit a certificate from the district stating the name and date(s) of the event, contact hours completed, and it must include an authorized signature. The person seeking recertification submits a fee of \$50.00 per CEU along with a copy of the certificate of attendance in addition to all other required documents for renewing the teaching certificate. Please note requirements for certification are subject to change. Details can be found at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/TeacherCertification/>.

#### **7. Would it be difficult to get 15 contact hours at a District-sponsored event?**

Many of the courses/trainings offered by the District are one day in length. Some professional development opportunities include multiple sessions throughout the school year. A single professional development event that has multiple meeting dates/sessions throughout the year is actually one course and will be entered in the software catalog accordingly.

**8. Can a school develop a course where staff can earn 15 contact hours?**

Since there is currently an established set of criteria for instructional in-service days at the site level, a course can be developed around those meeting days. The Professional Development Steering Committee is developing a process where other opportunities offered at the site level could be considered.

**9. Will courses sponsored by the District be offered for college credit?**

The District has in the past and will continue in the future to sponsor professional development courses where an optional upper division professional development credit is available. These specific courses occur off contract. Participants will register for the course utilizing the Avatar software. Registration for the college credit, however, can not be done online. It will be done at the first meeting of the class.

If you register for the college credit and complete your course work, you will need to contact the college for your transcript and submit the appropriate paperwork to the State for recertification. The college transcript will not be tracked through the software.

**10. Who should I contact to determine if courses will count toward the salary schedule?**

You will need to submit your request for salary upgrade to Human Resources and they will determine if the course qualifies.

**11. When completing the travel request form in the software, can I choose not to have a roommate?**

Double occupancy is encouraged but is not required.

**12. How do I find out about Out-of-District opportunities?**

Out-of-District opportunities that meet District criteria can be found on the District website on the Professional Development page. There is also a link to the page in the Avatar software.