



## KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# KENTUCKY IMPLEMENTS INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS FOR ALL STUDENTS

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DATA, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

STATE OF KENTUCKY



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Since 2002, an individual graduation plan has been a Kentucky high school graduation requirement for students. While technical compliance with the law may be served by the paper-based system, known as the Individual Graduation Plan (IGP), a planning process supported by technology ensures a more consistent implementation of legislative intent by increasing the schools' capacity to meet that intent.

At no cost to the schools or districts, the Individual Learning Plan (ILP), a web-enabled technology application that became available to schools and students in the fall of 2006, allows students in grades 6–12 to participate in their individual learning planning. The ILP incorporates assessments results, education plans, outcomes, student needs, academic and career interests, supports for successful transition and readiness for post-secondary learning opportunities and work. Students, parents, teachers and administrators can access the plans from any computer with internet access increasing the use and accessibility enormously.

Beyond written assurances, it was not possible to identify the extent to which schools were complying with the requirement for an individual graduation plan for each student. The task of completing these plans in their paper-based state was very time-consuming and sharing the plan with others once completed was even more burdensome. Typically, this task fell to a single school guidance counselor who could meet with the student only once a year for this purpose. With the implementation of the web-enabled ILP, many highly effective schools have used an advising team approach to student planning, which engages faculty in an advising capacity to a team of students, with whom they have worked for multiple years, lifting the burden from a single counselor. Teachers advise students on creating and updating the ILP continually all year, every year until the student graduates. The ILP is valuable to students graduating as they have a tool to take with them, accessible on the web, to gather college information, keep a current resume and a history of their education for future use, even after graduation.

The ILP has state reporting functionality that generates reports from all sections of the ILP. These reports are available for various purposes throughout Kentucky's state agencies. At any time reports such as ILP usage, student survey results or careers of interest can be reported based on current, real time student data.

KDE contracted with the vendor Career Cruising for just under \$500,000 per year to create and maintain the ILP. This is less per student annually than the cost of one school lunch. The individual benefits of this tool far outweigh the cost statewide for the over 340,000 student ILP accounts. Students and parents benefit from many functions that will propel students into the future with skills and knowledge they could not get from the paper-based IGP.

## ***BUSINESS PROBLEM AND SOLUTION***

Student Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) plan folders were easily obtained from the Kentucky Department of Education's website. However, since July 1, 2003, only 47,500 folders had been ordered. This represented only 14% of the students eligible to begin using the IGP in Kentucky middle and high schools. Parents on the Kentucky Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council were polled on two separate occasions regarding the IGP. Collectively, 80% of these parents were unaware of the IGP and its purpose.

Before the recent revision of 704 KAR 3:305, Minimum High School Graduation Requirements, Section 2, stipulated that: "Beginning with the graduating class of 2002, each student in a common school shall complete an individual graduation plan which incorporates emphasis on career development and shall have a total of at least twenty-two (22) credits for high school graduation." The IGP was a paper folder and information was entered by hand. Much of the data required was redundant to data captured in the student data management system. This resulted in the same data being entered multiple times increasing the chance of conflicting and erroneous data. The folders were usually kept in the counselor's office and updated only once a year. Consequently, the plan was not readily available to school faculty, students, parents, post-secondary institutions or potential employers as a means to guide, drive decisions about, and communicate the student's learning experiences and achievements. To alleviate these problems, some schools recreated the plan in Microsoft Word or in another electronic format. This meant that the plan formats and content were inconsistent across the state, hampering the ability to capture data at the state level for decision-making.

To alleviate the problems with the IGP, the Individual Learning Plan was created. This new program allows students and parents to participate in educational plans in a web-enabled system. It also helps schools and districts plan educational programs and opportunities to meet the needs and interests of their students.

Through the ILP, teachers and students have the opportunity to engage in advising and guidance specific to their educational goals. Students start career exploration at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level by completing the requirements within the ILP. They are able to create, review and reflect on goals they create and plans that will lead them to the post-secondary education experience they desire.

There are many features to help students using ILP such as Career Matchmaking, Resume Builder, Goals and Plans, Activities and Experiences, Awards and Recognitions, and the Education Planner. There is a link to [GoHigherKY.org](http://GoHigherKY.org), where students can explore how to plan for college, how to select a school and how to pay for college. These features create a unified, easily accessible portfolio of the student's educational accomplishments and goals.

The program is designed to get students involved in planning their futures, regardless of their aspirations. Every single child needs to be stretched and challenged, even our most high-performing students.

The program includes a survey that students can fill out, which educators hope will give them a better idea of how to cater to students' needs. To help matters, Kentucky is beginning the program in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The previous version didn't start until students were in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The ILP was developed by a vendor in collaboration with the ILP project management team and ILP advisory group, made up of teachers, counselors, administrators and state agency representatives. The management, governance and continued enhancement are overseen by KDE.

Information began to be shared with schools and districts before the launch of the ILP in September of 2005. Initially, the Commissioner of Education invited teams of teachers and administrators to attend the training in 2006 where they received ample training to return to the school and train others that would be using the ILP. This train the trainer method was efficient and successful the first year. Many schools and districts have embraced the transition and implemented in all grade levels even though it was only required by regulation for graduation in the class of 2012 and beyond

The on-going communication plan includes the establishment of an ILP contact at each district that receives information and updates from KDE. The contacts share information to the school level. Information is also shared with the ILP teachers, advisor, counselors and administrators at meetings, conferences and presentations. There is support for the schools and districts through the KDE Website, phone and email with timely response and communication when needed.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT**

Use of the ILP has increased since it was first implemented in September 2006. The results below show that students in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade last year are the first groups of students that must work on their ILP every year until graduation, the other grade levels could use the ILP or the IGP. The completion rate statewide has increased dramatically during the second year (07-08) of implementation.

ILP Completion Statistics School Year 2006-2007  
 Number-Indicates percentage students who have completed that section of the ILP  
 Blank-Indicates that the criteria is not a requirement for that grade

Completion Criteria	Grade Level						
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Advisement Activities							
Annual ILP Review	59%	36%	43%	16%	11%	8%	8%

Annual Student Survey	56%	32%	39%	13%	8%	6%	7%
<b>Career Exploration &amp; Assessments</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Career Matchmaker	71%		59%		20%		
My Skills				24%		11%	
Careers that Interest Me	67%	48%	56%	31%	18%	15%	12%
Schools that Interest Me		42%	52%	28%	17%	13%	11%
<b>Goals &amp; Plans</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Career & Life Goals			52%	29%	18%	14%	11%
Career Cluster Interests	64%	42%	52%	28%	16%	13%	11%
Post-Secondary Goals			50%	28%	17%	14%	11%
Career Planning Activities			48%	24%	14%	11%	10%
<b>Activities, Experiences &amp; Awards</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Organizations & Activities		40%	49%	25%	15%	12%	11%
Community Service			46%	23%	14%	11%	10%
<b>Education Plan</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Education Plan – Grade 9			30%	19%			
Education Plan – Grade 10				16%	12%		
Education Plan – Grade 11					10%	10%	
Education Plan – Grade 12						9%	9%

**ILP Completion Statistics School Year 2007-2008**  
 Number-Indicates percentage students who have completed that section of the ILP  
 Blank-Indicates that the criteria is not a requirement for that grade

Completion Criteria	Grade Level						
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Advisement Activities</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Annual ILP Review	84%	84%	81%	59%	51%	48%	58%
Annual Student Survey	79%	78%	75%	52%	44%	39%	54%
<b>Career Exploration &amp; Assessments</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Career Matchmaker	88%		89%		64%		
My Skills				70%		50%	
Careers that Interest Me	87%	89%	88%	75%	61%	55%	63%
Schools that Interest Me		87%	86%	73%	60%	53%	62%
<b>Goals &amp; Plans</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Career & Life Goals			87%	73%	61%	54%	62%
Career Cluster Interests	85%	86%	87%	71%	60%	54%	62%
Post-Secondary Goals			84%	70%	58%	52%	61%
Career Planning Activities			84%	69%	56%	50%	61%
<b>Activities, Experiences &amp; Awards</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Organizations & Activities		85%	85%	69%	57%	51%	61%
Community Service			82%	68%	55%	49%	60%

Education Plan	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Education Plan: Grade 9			77%	64%			
Education Plan: Grade 10				60%	55%		
Education Plan: Grade 11					51%	48%	
Education Plan: Grade 12						45%	59%

The beneficiaries of this project include:

- Kentucky’s Students grades 6-12, Their Parents and Their Schools  
 In 2002-03, there were 154,644 students in grades 6-8, and 190,210 in grades 9-12. Each of Kentucky’s 216 middle schools and 234 high schools in the 176 school districts is responsible for creating and maintaining an individual learning plan for every student.
- Postsecondary Education and Employers  
 Just over 95% of Kentucky’s high school graduates enter college, technical school, the military, the workforce, or a combination thereof. However, over 50% of students statewide are placed in remedial or developmental work because they are not fully prepared for the choice they made. National research indicates that placement in remedial education among first time freshman is a strong predictor of college drop-out. Council on Postsecondary Education will gain information and use data from this technology–based individual learning plan.
- Kentucky Board of Education/ Kentucky Department of Education/ Local Districts  
 Data gathered from the individual learning plans, combined with data about what happens to students in the years after they leave high schools, will inform decisions about public policy, technical assistance, and other state-level activities. These decisions will help schools prepare each student to be a successful graduate.
- Local District and School Staff  
 Local staffs in Kentucky’s public secondary schools are stakeholders in this process since they bear the majority of responsibility for implementation. Specifically: district technology coordinators must support the application; school administrators and faculty bear responsibility for considering information contained in the plan to design appropriate services; and, school counselors are responsible for ensuring that statutory requirements for student plans are met.

The ILP gives KDE a glimpse into the goals, plans and future of the students in Kentucky. The ILP state reporting function can verify that students have met the state minimum high school graduation requirements. ILP usage and completion can be monitored and reported in real time.

### ***BENEFIT OF THE PROJECT***

From a technical aspect ILP allows students, counselors, and other school personnel to capture/enter data in real-time mode.

From a business perspective, benefits include:

- KDE, KHEAA, schools, districts and other stakeholders have instant, anytime access to student data to be used to inform agency thinking, planning and decision making

- Increased student participation and understanding in their own academic and career planning
- Raised level of student achievement and graduation
- Enables more timely and appropriate responsiveness to student needs by all stakeholders
- Increases the number of students who successfully transition into secondary educational programs
- Reduces statewide and local costs resulting from individual districts procurement of similar software.

The new web-enabled Individual Learning Plan helps Kentucky's secondary students (grades 6-12) better focus their coursework on individual goals as they prepare for post-secondary studies and careers.

The Career Matchmaker is a favorite section of the ILP for students. They answer questions, and based upon their answers have 40 career suggestions, with in depth information about the careers. Students can read, view pictures and watch interviews of men and women in the careers. The ILP offers students as much information as possible so that they can make informed decisions about their future. Student responses have been enthusiastic.

Counselors have seen tremendous value in having students working on ILPs as well. They now have avenues for conversation with students that were not available before. Students feel more connected to the adults in their schools because the ILP is bridging the gap among the student, the teachers and counselors. Teachers, advisors, counselors, and mentors have access to the students' ILP and use it to communicate, build relationships and help with transitions.

Beginning in the 6th grade students can see into their future. They have a tool that will propel them to be all they want to be. The ILP helps students see what is ahead of them and how to get there.

During the 2007-2008 school year, the 344,000 ILP students have accessed the ILP over 1,500,000 times and viewed over 65,000,000 pages of valuable information. "The students really enjoy putting information in the program; it is what they are used to in the digital age. The paper copy does not fit into their learning and working style. This is definitely a tool that helps the students and I am so thrilled to be able to use it with the students," says Lorry Beth Wilson, Ballard County ILP Administrator/Teacher.

The ILP gives new relevance to what students learn in the classroom and provide more connectedness to the world that awaits them. The long term benefits will not be measured until the class of 2012 graduates and succeed at the next level of education.

ILP is all about the students and making their journey through the public school system as meaningful and purposeful as possible.