

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a staff development program and structure to carry out planning and reporting on staff development that supports improved student learning.

II. DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND SITE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

- A. The school board will establish District Professional Development Committee to develop a Professional Development Plan, assist Site Professional Development Teams in developing a site plan consistent with the goals of the Professional Development Plan, and evaluate professional development efforts at the site level.
 - 1. The majority of the membership of the District Professional Development Committee shall consist of teachers representing various grade levels, subject areas, and special education. The Committee also will include nonteaching staff, parents, and administrators.
 - 2. The majority of the Site Professional Development Teams shall be teachers representing various grade levels, subject areas, and special education.

III. DUTIES OF THE DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- A. The District Professional Development Committee will develop a Professional Development Plan that will be reviewed and subject to approval by the school board annually.
- B. The Professional Development Plan must contain the following elements:
 - 1. Professional development outcomes that are consistent with the education outcomes as may be determined periodically by the school board;
 - 2. The means to achieve the Professional Development outcomes;
 - 3. The procedures for evaluating progress at each school site toward meeting educational outcomes consistent with relicensure requirements under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.187;
 - 4. Ongoing professional development activities that contribute toward continuous improvement in achievement of the following goals:
 - a. Improve student achievement of state and local education standards

in all areas of the curriculum, including areas of regular academic and applied and experiential learning, by using research-based best practices methods;

- b. Effectively meet the needs of a diverse student population, including at-risk children, children with disabilities, English learners, and gifted children, within the regular classroom, applied and experiential learning settings, and other settings;
- c. Provide an inclusive curriculum for a racially, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse student population that is consistent with state education diversity rule and the district's education diversity plan;
- d. Improve staff collaboration and develop mentoring and peer coaching programs for teachers new to the school or district;
- e. Effectively teach and model violence prevention policy and curriculum that address early intervention alternatives, issues of harassment, and teach nonviolent alternatives for conflict resolution;
- f. Effectively deliver digital and blended learning and curriculum and engage students with technology; and
- g. Provide teachers and other members of site-based management teams with appropriate management and financial management skills.

5. The Professional Development Plan also must:

- a. Support stable and productive professional communities achieved through ongoing and schoolwide progress and growth in teaching practice;
- b. Emphasize coaching, professional learning communities, classroom action research, and other job-embedded models;
- c. Maintain a strong subject matter focus premised on students' learning goals consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.125;
- d. Ensure specialized preparation and learning about issues related to teaching English learners and students with special needs by focusing on long-term systemic efforts to improve educational services and opportunities and raise student achievement; and
- e. Reinforce national and state standards of effective teaching practice.

6. Professional Development activities must:
 - a. Focus on the school classroom and research-based strategies that improve student learning;
 - b. Provide opportunities for teachers to practice and improve their instructional skills over time;
 - c. Provide opportunities for teachers to use student data as part of their daily work to increase student achievement;
 - d. Enhance teacher content knowledge and instructional skills, including to accommodate the delivery of digital and blended learning and curriculum and engage students with technology;
 - e. Align with state and local academic standards;
 - f. Provide opportunities to build professional relationships, foster collaboration among principals and staff who provide instruction, and provide opportunities for teacher-to-teacher mentoring;
 - g. Align with the plan, if any, of the district or site for an alternative teacher professional pay system;
 - h. Provide teachers of English learners, including English as a second language, and content teachers with differentiated instructional strategies critical for ensuring students long-term academic success, the means to effectively use assessment data on the academic literacy, oral academic language, and English language development of English learners, and skills to support native and English language development across the curriculum; and
 - i. Provide opportunities for staff to learn about current workforce trends, the connections between workforce trends and postsecondary education, and training options, including career and technical education options.
7. Professional development activities may include curriculum development and curriculum training programs and activities that provide teachers and other members of site-based teams training to enhance team performance.
8. The school district may implement other professional development activities required by law and activities associated with professional teacher compensation models.

- C. The District Professional Development Committee will assist Site Professional Development Teams in developing a site plan consistent with the goals and outcomes of the Professional Development Plan.

- D. The District Professional Development Committee will evaluate professional development efforts at the site level and will report to the school board annually the extent to which staff at the site have met the outcomes of the Professional Development Plan.
- E. In addition to developing a Professional Development Plan, the District Professional Development Committee also must develop teacher mentoring programs for teachers new to the profession or school district, including teaching residents, teachers of color, teachers who are American Indian, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs, or experienced teachers in need of peer coaching. Teacher mentoring programs must be included in or aligned with the school district's teacher evaluation and peer review processes under Minnesota Statutes, sections 122A.40, subdivision 8 or 122A.41, subdivision 5.
- F. The District Professional Development Committee shall assist the school district in preparing any reports required by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) relating to professional development or teacher mentoring including, but not limited to, the reports referenced in Section VII. below.

IV. DUTIES OF THE SITE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- A. Each Site Professional Development Team shall develop a site plan, consistent with the goals of the Professional Development Plan. The school board will review the site plans for consistency with the Professional Development Plan.
- B. The Site Professional Development Team must demonstrate to the school board the extent to which staff at the site have met the outcomes of the Professional Development Plan. The actual reports to the school board can be made by the District Professional Development Committee to avoid duplication of effort.
- C. If the school board determines that professional development outcomes are not being met, it may withhold a portion of the initial allocation of revenue referenced in Section V. below.

V. STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

- A. Unless the school district is in statutory operating debt or a majority of the school board and a majority of its licensed teachers annually vote to waive the requirement to reserve basic revenue for professional development, the school district will reserve an amount equal to at least two percent of its basic revenue for:
 - 1. Teacher development and evaluation under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.40, subdivision 8 or 122A.41, subdivision 5;
 - 2. Principal development and evaluation under section 123B.147, subdivision. 3;

3. Professional development under section 122A.60;
 4. In-service education for violence prevention programs to help students learn how to resolve conflicts within their families and communities in non-violent, effective ways; professional under section 120B.22, subdivision 2;
 5. Teacher mentorship under section 122A.70, subdivision 1. To the extent extra funds remain, professional development revenue may be used for development plans, including plans for challenging instructional activities and experiences under section 122A.60, and for curriculum development and programs, other in-service education, teacher's workshops, teacher conferences, the cost of substitute teachers for professional development purposes, preservice and in-service education for special education professionals and paraprofessionals, and other related costs for professional development efforts. The school district also may use the revenue reserved for professional development for grants to the school district's teachers to pay for coursework and training leading to certification as either a college in the schools teacher or a concurrent enrollment teacher. To receive a grant, the teacher must be enrolled in a program that includes coursework and training focused on teaching a core subject.
- B. The school district may, in its discretion, expend an additional amount of unreserved revenue for professional development based on its needs.
 - C. Release time provided for teachers to supervise students on field trips and school activities, or independent tasks not associated with enhancing the teacher's knowledge and instructional skills, such as preparing report cards, calculating grades, or organizing classroom materials, may not be counted as professional development time that is financed with staff development reserved revenue under Minnesota Statutes section 122A.61.
 - D. The school district may use professional development revenue, special grant programs established by the legislature, or another funding source to pay a stipend to a mentor who may be a current or former teacher who has taught at least three (3) years and is not on an improvement plan. Other initiatives using such funds or funds available under Minnesota Statutes, sections 124D.861 and 124D.862.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR USE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- A. On a yearly basis, the District Professional Development Committee, with the assistance of the Site Professional Development Teams, shall prepare a projected budget setting forth proposals for allocating professional development and mentoring funds reserved for each school site. Such budgets shall include, but not be limited to, projections as to the cost of building site training programs, costs of individual staff seminars, and cost of substitutes.
- B. Upon approval of the budget by the school board, the Advisory Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the use of such funds in accordance with the

Professional Development Plan and budget. The requested use of professional development funds must meet or make progress toward the goals and objectives of the Professional, Development Plan. All costs/expenditures will be reviewed by the school board and/or superintendent for consistency with the Professional Development Plan.

- C. Individual requests from staff for leave to attend professional development activities shall be submitted and reviewed according to school district policy, staff procedures, contractual agreement, and the effect on school district operations. Failure to timely submit such requests may be cause for denial of the request.

VII. PARAPROFESSIONALS, TITLE I AIDES, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

- A. The school district must provide a minimum of eight hours of paid orientation or professional development annually to all paraprofessionals, Title I aides, and other instructional support staff. Six of the eight hours must be completed before the first instructional day of the school year or within 30 days of hire. The school district must consult the exclusive representative for employees receiving this training before creating or planning the training required under this section.
- B. The orientation or professional development must be relevant to the employee's occupation and may include collaboration time with classroom teachers and planning for the school year.
- C. For paraprofessionals who provide direct support to students, at least 50 percent of the professional development or orientation must be dedicated to meeting the requirements of this section. Professional development for paraprofessionals may also address the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.363, subdivision 3.
- D. A school administrator must provide an annual certification of compliance with this requirement to the MDE Commissioner.

VIII. REPORTING

- A. The school district and site professional development committee shall prepare a report of the previous fiscal year's professional development activities and expenditures as required by MDE.
- B. To the extent the school district receives a grant for mentorship activities described in Section V.D., by June 30 of each year after receiving a grant, the site staff development committee must submit a report to the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board on program efforts that describes mentoring and induction activities and assesses the impact of these programs on teacher effectiveness and retention.

Source: Cambridge-Isanti Schools

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120A.41 (Length of School Year; Days of Instruction)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.415 (Extended School Calendar)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.125 (Planning for Students' Successful Transition to Postsecondary Education and Employment; Personal Learning Plans)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.22, Subd. 2 (Violence Prevention Education)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.642 (Paraprofessional Training)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.187 (Expiration and Renewal)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, Subds. 7, 7a and 8 (Employment; Contracts; Termination - Additional Staff Development and Salary)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.41, Subds. 4, 4a and 5 (Teacher Tenure Act; Cities of the First Class; Definitions - Additional Staff Development and Salary)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.60 (Staff Development Program)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.70 (Teacher Mentorship and Retention of Effective Teachers)
Minn. Stat. § 122A.61 (Reserved Revenue for Staff Development)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.147, Subd. 3 (Principals)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.861 (Achievement and Integration for Minnesota)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.862 (Achievement and Integration Revenue)
Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, Subds. 2 and 2b (General Education Revenue)
Minn. Stat. § 126C.13, Subd. 5 (General Education Levy and Aid)

Cross References: Policy 601.1 (New Teacher Mentor Program)

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