

Personnel

SUBJECT: PROFESSIONAL GROWTH/STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The District will work to provide staff with professional learning opportunities. These opportunities will be designed to foster the professional growth of staff, help staff remain current with their profession, and meet the learning needs of students. Opportunities that may be provided for, include, but are not limited to:

- a) Planned in-service programs, courses, seminars, and workshops offered both within and outside the District.
- b) Videoconferences, prerecorded videos, and/or online discussion boards.
- c) Visits to other classrooms and schools, as well as attendance at professional meetings, for the purpose of improving instruction and/or educational services.
- d) Orientation or re-orientation of staff members to program and/or organizational changes, as well as District expectations.

Attendance at professional learning programs must be directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the staff member. Consequently, staff members are encouraged to participate in the planning of staff development programs designed to meet their specific needs.

Staff members are also encouraged to continue their formal education, as well as to attend work-related workshops, conferences, and meetings.

Funds for participating-in conferences, conventions, and other similar professional learning programs will be budgeted for by the Board on an annual basis. Reimbursement to staff members for all actual and necessary registration fees, expenses of travel, meals and lodging, as well as all necessary tuition fees incurred in connection with attendance at conferences, will be in accordance with District documents which address conference attendance and expense reimbursement.

The Superintendent or designee has authority to approve release time and expenses for staff members' attendance at professional training conferences, study councils, in-service courses, workshops, summer study grants, school visitations, and professional organizations within budgetary constraints and the terms of collective bargaining agreements.

A conference request form or course approval form must be submitted by the employee and approved by the designated administrator prior to the employee's attendance at the conference or other professional development program.

Professional Learning Plans

By September 1 of each school year, the District will adopt or, in the case of multi-year plans, readopt a professional learning plan that meets the content requirements specified in the Commissioner's

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regulations. The professional learning plan will be structured in a format consistent with the Commissioner's guidelines and will include, among other things, a description of:

- a) The professional learning activities provided to all professional staff and supplementary school personnel who work with students with exceptional learning needs, particularly students with disabilities, English language learners, students who are gifted and talented, and students with low literacy levels, to enable them to identify these students and provide instruction based on the needs of these students.
- b) How professional learning related to educator practice and curriculum development are culturally responsive and reflect the needs of the community that the District serves.
- c) Expected participation in continuing teacher and leader education (CTLE), as well as other professional learning opportunities provided by the District.

The professional learning plan will be developed through collaboration with a professional learning team. The Board will appoint the members of this team in accordance with the Commissioner's regulations.

Mentoring Program

The District's professional learning plan will include a provision for a mentoring program. The purpose of the mentoring program is to provide guidance and support for educators who hold an initial certificate in the classroom teaching service or as a school building leader to ease the transition from teacher and school building leader preparation to practice in order to increase retention of teachers and school building leaders. Additionally, the mentoring program is intended to increase the skills of new teachers and school building leaders in order to improve student achievement.

The mentoring program will be developed and implemented consistent with any collective bargaining agreement.

Education Law §§ 1604 1608, 1716, 1950, 2118, and 2601
General Municipal Law §§ 77-b and 77-c
8 NYCRR § 100.2(dd)

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #6161 -- Conference/Travel Expense Reimbursement
#6213 -- Registration and Professional Learning

Adopted: 6/22/99
Revised: 9/6/22, 2/28/23