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STAFF DEVELOPMENT; INSERVICE EDUCATION/VISITATIONS/CONFERENCES

The board of trustees recognizes its legal obligation to provide inservice activities that are aligned with student learning and educator development needs, and school, and/or State improvement goals. It is the board's priority that continuing education for teaching staff focus on the improvement of teachers' and school leaders' effectiveness in assisting students in the achievement of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in mathematics and language arts and literacy and Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS).

The lead person shall develop a comprehensive management system for staff professional improvement and shall assist staff members in the area of professional improvement by providing relevant information regarding workshops, professional meetings and course offerings. Professional learning shall incorporate coherent, sustained, and evidence-based strategies that improve educator effectiveness and student achievement, including job-embedded coaching or other forms of assistance to support educators' transfer of new knowledge and skills to their work.

Professional Development for School Leaders

“School leader” means an administrator whose position requires possession of a school administrator, principal, or supervisor endorsement.

All active school leaders serving on a permanent or interim basis shall complete training on issues of school law, ethics, governance, and harassment, intimidation and bullying (N.J.S.A. 18A:26-8.2); and other statutory requirements related to student safety and well-being. To meet this ongoing requirement, the specific training needs of each school leader will be reviewed annually as part of the professional development planning process.

A. School Leaders

The lead person, principals, and supervisors shall fulfill the professional development requirement through the creation, implementation, and completion of a professional development plan that:

1. Aligns with the Professional Standards for School Leaders and the Standards for Professional Learning;
2. Derives from the results of observations, evidence, and recommendations included in the annual performance evaluation of the lead person, principals, or supervisors;
3. Identifies professional goals that address specific individual, or school goals; and

Grounds professional development activities in objectives related to improving teaching, learning, and student achievement, and in support of the school professional development plan.

B. Professional Development Requirements for the Lead Person

The board of trustees shall oversee and review the lead person's professional development. The professional development shall be linked to individual and school development goals and to the school's professional development plan.

The board of trustees shall review the professional development plan. The lead person shall provide to the board of trustees annual evidence of progress toward completion of the professional development plan and summative evidence of plan completion every three to five years, depending on the lead person's contract with the board of trustees.

In cases where there is disagreement between a lead person and his or her board of trustees regarding plan contents or progress toward completion, the lead person may appeal to the executive county superintendent, who will have final decision-making authority on all such matters.

C. Professional Development Requirements for Principals, Supervisors and Other Administrators

The lead person shall oversee and review professional development for each principal and supervisor. The professional development shall be linked to individual and school professional development goals and the school's professional development plan.

Leaders whose positions require a principal or supervisor endorsement shall have an annual plan developed in collaboration with the lead person, or designee holding a lead person endorsement. Leaders whose positions require a lead person's endorsement but who do not serve as a lead person of the school shall have an annual plan developed in collaboration with the lead person, or designee holding a lead person endorsement.

The lead person, or designee holding an administrator endorsement, shall meet with the principal, supervisor, or other school administrator at mid-year to assess progress toward completion or modification of the plan. The lead person, or designee holding an administrator endorsement, shall review the status of the professional development plan as part of the principal's, supervisor's, or other administrator's annual performance evaluation.

D. Evidence of Progress

Each active school leader shall be required to provide evidence of progress toward fulfillment of his or her plan including a narrative account detailing plan goals and their achievement; and documentation of professional growth activities such as school-based learning activities; training; university coursework; action research; and study groups. Study groups may include school, district, county, and/or State associations and organizations, school and district collaborative teams, and virtual learning communities.

Professional Development for Teachers

To meet the state professional development requirements, each teacher shall be guided by an individualized professional development plan (PDP), which shall include at least 20 hours per year of qualifying activities. The 20-hour annual requirement shall be reduced by a pro rata share reflecting the use of family or medical leave. It is the individual teacher's responsibility in accordance with board policies, to assure that a teacher meets the professional development requirement. There is no mandated financial obligation on the part of the board.

The content of each PDP shall be developed by each teacher's supervisor in consultation with the teacher and shall align with the Professional Standards for Teachers in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.3 and the Standards for

Professional Learning in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3. The PDP shall be effective for one year and shall specify, at a minimum:

- A. One area for development of professional practice derived from the results of observations and evidence accumulated through the teacher's annual performance evaluation;
- B. As appropriate, an additional area for development of professional practice aligned to the teacher's role as a member of his or her collaborative professional learning team. The professional learning team consists of teachers, school leaders, and other administrative, instructional, and educational services staff members who commit to working together to accomplish common goals and who are engaged in a continuous cycle of professional improvement focused on:
 - 1. Evaluating student learning needs through ongoing reviews of data on student performance; and
 - 2. Defining a clear set of educator learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of these data
- C. As appropriate, an additional area for development of professional practice aligned with school and/or school improvement plans and goals; and
- D. Any requirements for professional development stipulated elsewhere in statute or regulation.

The progress of each teacher in meeting the goals of the PDP must be determined annually and aligned to the school process for teacher evaluation. Progress on the PDP must be discussed during a minimum of one annual conference between the teacher and his or her supervisor. Each teacher shall provide evidence of progress toward meeting the requirements of his or her individual PDP, and this evidence must be reviewed as part of each conference. The PDP shall be revised at a minimum annually but may be adjusted as necessary to support the teacher's progress. All teachers shall have an individual PDP within 30 instructional days of the beginning of their respective teaching assignments.

A teacher's individual PDP goals may necessitate more than the recommended minimum requirements. The PDP shall accommodate additional professional development as necessary. Additional hours of qualifying activities may be required for teachers in low-performing schools, as determined by the Commissioner.

The board of trustees shall ensure that all teachers receive the necessary opportunities, support, and resources to engage in ongoing professional learning and to complete the requirements of their respective PDPs.

School-Level Professional Development Plans

The principal shall oversee the development and implementation of a plan for school-level professional development. The school-level professional development plan shall include a description of school-level and team-based professional learning aligned with identified school goals, and teacher and student learning needs. The school-level plans shall become part of the school professional development plan reviewed by the board of trustees.

The principal shall ensure that all teachers receive the necessary opportunities, support, and resources to complete professional development requirements.

School-Level Professional Development Plans

The lead person or his or her designees shall oversee the development and implementation of plans to address the schools' professional development needs.

The lead person shall (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.6):

- A. Review school-level professional development plans;
- B. Assess the learning needs of students, teachers, and school leaders based on educator evaluation data, school-level plans, and data from school-level performances;
- C. Plan, support, and implement professional development activities that address the CCSS and the CCCS, and that align with the Standards for Professional Learning in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3 and the Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.3 and 3.4; and
- D. Develop and update, as necessary, the school mentoring plan for new teachers (board policy 4112.2 Certification and N.J.A.C. 6A:9-8.4).

The lead person shall review the school plan annually to assess its effectiveness and revise it as necessary to meet the school's learning goals for students, teachers, and school leaders. The school plan shall provide information on school-wide professional development opportunities, the resources being allocated toward their support, and a justification for the expenditures. The school plan shall also include any professional development required by statute or regulation.

The lead person shall be responsible for the content and implementation of the school professional development plan. The lead person shall present the plan to the board of trustees to review for fiscal impact.

The board of trustees reserves the right to deny any plan that fails to advance school goals and objectives; is not conducive to student achievement of the Common Core State Standards or the Core Curriculum Content Standards; or contravenes current negotiated agreements, other board policies, student safety and well-being, continuity of the instructional program, or budgetary constraints.

Staff participation that may require release time and/or financial reimbursement from the board will be determined by the board of trustees after recommendation by the lead person.

Staff members who participate in out-of-school programs at board expense shall submit a written report highlighting the main thrust and ideas observed by the participant.

Mandated Inservice Programs

The lead person shall arrange development of appropriate inservice presentations, seminars and/or workshops on equity issues, special education, child abuse and neglect, drug/alcohol abuse awareness, handling blood and body fluids, possible hazardous substances in the workplace, crises response, school violence and other topics specifically required by federal or New Jersey law. These required presentations, seminars and/or workshops shall not count automatically toward the required 20 hours of continuing education every five years annually.

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