

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

No. 333

Section: Employees

Title: Professional
Learning

Adopted: August 27, 1981

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Purpose

The School District of Philadelphia is committed to the ongoing growth of all teachers and leaders through rigorous, relevant professional learning and support so all students have access to an excellent education. Investment in high quality professional learning is essential to student success. Adult learning is an embedded and ongoing aspect of educators' daily work and integrates every aspect of their work into a cohesive system.

Definitions

The following words and phrases, when used in this policy, shall have the meaning given to them in this section:

School system leaders: are defined as principals, assistant principals, Assistant Superintendents, Superintendent and individuals who are converting an administrative certificate from a Level I certificate to a Level II certificate. [4]

Professional learning: is defined as an integral part of school and local educational agency strategies for providing educators (including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and, as applicable, early childhood educators) with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well-rounded education and to meet the challenging State academic standards; and sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused activities.

Induction plan: is defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) as a plan for the induction experience for first-year teachers (including teachers in prekindergarten programs, when offered), long-term substitutes who are hired for a position for 45 days or more, and educational specialists. The Education Induction Plan guidelines outlines the requirements for this plan.

Professional education committee: a committee tasked with preparing a school's Professional Education Plan consisting of:

- Teacher representatives divided equally among elementary, middle, and high school teachers, chosen by the teachers;
- Educational specialist representatives, chosen by educational specialists; Administrative representatives, chosen by the administrators of the school entity;
- Parents of children attending a school in the district, appointed by the board of school directors;
- Local business representatives, appointed by the board of school directors; and
- Other individuals representing the community, appointed by the board of school directors.

Authority

The Board of Education ("Board") directs all District employees to further their professional learning through graduate study, inservice training, conference attendance, and professional development activities. [1][2][3]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board directs the Superintendent and/or their designee to develop and implement professional development consistent with state regulations and contractual obligations.

Guidelines

Graduate/Special Courses

Only courses of study that are preapproved in writing shall be eligible for reimbursement by the District or a change in compensation for the employee. Documentary evidence of satisfactory completion of all study programs shall be required.

Reimbursement for credits for approved graduate study or special courses shall be made in accordance with the terms of an administrative compensation plan, an individual contract, or an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Approved graduate study or special courses/programs may be of sufficient advantage to the District to warrant an increase in an employee's annual salary, upon documentation of satisfactory completion. Such an increase will be in accordance with the provisions of an administrative compensation plan, individual contract, applicable collective bargaining agreement, or Board resolution. [5][6]

Induction Plan

The District shall comply with Department of Education requirements when developing and maintaining an induction plan for first-year teachers, long-term substitutes hired for a position for forty-five (45) days or more, educational specialists, and teachers new to the District. The District shall develop and submit the induction plan to the Department of Education for approval every six (6) years or as required by law and regulations. [7][8]

Continuing Professional Education for School System Leaders

School system leaders shall complete an induction program which is consistent with the Pennsylvania School Leadership Standards within five (5) years of serving as a school system leader in Pennsylvania for the first time. [8][9][10]

Professional Education Plan

The Board shall appoint to the professional education committee parents/guardians of children attending a school in the District, local business representatives, and other individuals representing the community. Representatives of administrators, teachers, and educational specialists on the professional education committee shall be selected by their respective members. [2][10]

The District shall develop and submit a professional education plan to the Secretary of Education for approval every three (3) years or as required by law and regulations. The professional education plan shall be designed to meet the educational needs of the District and its certificated administrative and professional employees; specify approved courses, programs, activities, and learning experiences; and identify approved providers. [2][8][10]

The District shall annually review the professional education plan to determine if the plan continues to meet the needs of the District, employees, students, and community. The District may make amendments to the plan, subject to approval by the Board and the Department of Education. [2]

The Board may approve, on a case-by-case basis, specific professional learning activities not stated within the District's professional education plan. [3]

If the District pays all costs of credits or hours, the Board may disapprove any course, program, activity, or learning experience that is inconsistent with the goals of the professional education plan. [3]

Other Professional Learning Activities

The District shall develop administrative procedures regarding professional learning.

Legal References:

1. [24 P.S. § 5-517](#)

2. [24 P.S. § 12-1205.1](#)
3. [24 P.S. § 12-1205.2](#)
4. [24 P.S. § 12-1217](#)
5. [24 P.S. § 11-1144](#)
6. [24 P.S. § 11-1151](#)
7. 22 Pa. Code § 49.16
8. 22 Pa. Code § 4.13
9. [24 P.S. § 12-1205.5](#)
10. 22 Pa. Code § 49.17
11. [24 P.S. § 1-102](#)
12. [24 P.S. § 12-1205.7](#)
13. [20 U.S.C. § 7801](#)