

Staff Development

“Staff development” or professional learning is viewed by the Board of Education (Board) as a continuous systematic effort to improve educational programs in this school district through (1) staff involvement in organized program planning, implementation and evaluation efforts, and (2) activities to upgrade the skills, knowledge and ability of educators to improve student learning.

Each certified employee shall annually participate in a program of professional development or professional learning, of not fewer than eighteen hours in length, of which a preponderance is in a small group or individual group settings. The professional learning program shall:

1. be a comprehensive, sustained and intensive approach to improving teacher and administrator effectiveness in increasing student knowledge achievement;
2. focus on refining and improving various effective teaching methods that are shared between and among educators;
3. foster collective responsibility for improved student performance;
4. be comprised of professional learning that is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards; conducted at the school among educators and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors and distinguished educators or other appropriate teachers; occur frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job-embedded process of continuous improvement; and include a repository of best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each school that is continuously available to such educators for comment and updating; and
5. include training in culturally responsive pedagogy and practice.

Professional learning experiences made available by the Board directly, through a RESC, with another Board of Education, or through a provider approved by the Commissioner shall be consistent with any goals identified by the certified employees and the Board.

The Board believes that professional learning experiences should be comprehensive, sustained, and intensive enough to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness in raising student performance and foster collective responsibility for improved student performance.

Teachers must constantly review curricular content, teaching methods and materials, educational philosophy and goals, social change, and other topics related to education to enhance the capabilities of educators to improve student learning. The Board of Education recognizes that it shares with its certified staff responsibility for the upgrading and updating of teacher performance and attitudes. The Board of Education and teachers’ organizations support the principle of continuing training of teachers and the improvement of instruction.

All employees shall be provided opportunities for the development of increased competence beyond that which they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties.

The Board, in order to determine its professional learning program and in seeking the advice and assistance of teachers, shall establish a professional development and evaluation committee (PDEC) consisting of certified employees and including representatives of the teachers’ bargaining group. Committee membership shall consist of at least one representative from each of the teachers’ and administrators’ unions and other school personnel the Board deems

appropriate. The duties of the committee shall include, but not be limited to, participation in the development of a teacher evaluation and support program for the District; and the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive local professional learning plan, in fulfillment of the statutes, for certified employees of the District. Such plan shall (1) be directly related to the educational goals proposed by the Board pursuant to C.G.S. 10-220(b), (2) be developed in full consideration of the priorities and needs related to student outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education, and (3) provide for the ongoing and systematic assessment and improvement of both teacher evaluation and professional development of the Board's professional staff members, including personnel management and evaluation training or experiences for administrators, and shall be related to regular and special student needs, which may include provisions concerning career incentives and parent involvement.

The members chosen by the Board to be on the professional development and evaluation committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

Special effort shall be made to prepare teachers and other school personnel to meet the needs of students of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Planning and implementation of such programs shall be done cooperatively by administration, teachers and parent advisory groups. Special effort shall also be given to administrators and/or supervisors in training pursuant to their obligations in the evaluation of the teachers.

Staff development activities should respond directly to the educational needs of the student body. The in-service program shall fulfill all applicable statutory requirements, especially those delineated in CGS 10-220a, as amended.

Such in-service training program for certified staff shall provide information on (1) the nature and the relationship of drugs and alcohol to health and personality development and procedures for discouraging their abuse; (2) health and mental health risk reduction education that includes, but need not be limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence and child abuse; (3) school violence prevention, conflict resolution, the prevention of an response to youth suicide and the identification, prevention of and response to bullying; (4) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency life-saving procedures; (5) the requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter; and (6) the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia, as defined in CGS 10-3d.

The Board will allow any paraprofessional or noncertified employee of the District to participate, on a voluntary basis, in any in-service training program provided to certified staff on those topics mandated per C.G.S. 10-220a, subsection (a).

The Superintendent is to report annually to the Board of Education on the professional development program and its effect with recommendations for changes as needed.

Professional Development Pertaining to Human Trafficking

The Board, in compliance with PA 17-32, shall provide training pertaining to human trafficking to those staff members who have contact with students. These individuals must complete the initial educational training by July 1, 2018 and refresher training annually thereafter. New hires must complete the initial training within six months after their start date, or by July 1, 2018, whichever is later. This training shall use the training program, which includes a video presentation developed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) pertaining to the

awareness of human trafficking issues and how to accurately and promptly identify and report suspected human trafficking.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-27 Exchange of professional personnel and students.

10-220a In-service training. (amended by PA 04-227, PA 08-160, June 19 Special Session, Public Act No. 09-1, PA 10-91, PA 12-116, PA 13-145, PA 15-215, PA 17-37 and PA 19-100)

10-153b Selection of teachers' representatives

10-226f Coordinator of intergroup relations.

10-226g Intergroup relations training for teachers.

10-145b Teaching certificates (as amended by PA 01-173)

10-148a Professional development (as amended by PA 17-37 and PA 19-100)

10-151(b) Employment of teachers. Definitions. Tenure

PA 17-32 An Act Concerning Human Trafficking

PA 17-37 An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Task Force on Professional Development and In-service Training Requirements for Educators.

Adopted: November 10, 2020

NORTH CANAAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

North Canaan, Connecticut