

Personnel -- Certified

Staff Development

“Staff development” 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, beginning July 1, 2013, shall annually participate in a program of professional development, of not fewer than eighteen hours in length, of which a preponderance is in a small group or individual group settings. The professional development 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, and
4. be comprised of professional learning that is aligned with state student academic achievement standards, conducted at the school among educators and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors and distinguished educators or other appropriate teachers, occurs frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers and includes a repository or best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each school.

Staff development experiences, made available by the Board directly, or through a RESC, with another Board of Education or through a provider approved by the Commissioner, shall be guided by activities designed to:

- improve the integration of reading instruction, literacy and numeracy enhancement and cultural awareness into instructional practice,
- include strategies to improve English language learner instruction into instructional practice,
- improve teacher and administrator practice based on general results and findings from teacher evaluations reported by the Superintendent or his/her designee,
- be comprehensive, sustained, and intensive enough to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness in raising student performance,
- be aligned with state student academic achievement standards,
- foster collective responsibility for improved student performance.

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Staff Development (continued)

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 development program seeking the advice and assistance of teachers, shall establish a professional development and evaluation committee, consisting of certified employees, including representatives of the exclusive bargaining representative for such employees. 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, the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive local professional development 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, shall be related to regular and special student needs and 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 teacher.

Staff development activities should respond directly to the educational needs of the student body, including, (a) content areas such as language arts, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and enacting; math, social studies and science; (b) methodological areas such as motivation, teaching techniques, including the use of computers in the classroom and classroom management; and second language acquisition and (c) affective areas of interpersonal relations of students and faculty, student growth and development and staff communication, problem solving, and decision-making. The in-service program shall fulfill all applicable statutory requirements, especially those delineated in CGS 10-220a.

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Staff Development (continued)

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 District, as required, will participate in compliance audits of the professional development program, as required and conducted to the State Department of Education.

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 Teacher Evaluation and Support Program

The Board, prior to implementing the teacher evaluation and support program contained within P.A. 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform, but not later than July 1, 2014, shall provide training for all evaluators and orientation to all certified District employees relating to the provisions of such teacher evaluation and support program. Such training shall provide instruction to evaluators in how to conduct proper performance evaluations prior to the use of the new evaluation and support program. Such orientation shall be completed by all certified personnel, below the rank of Superintendent, before the certified employee receives an evaluation under the teacher evaluation and support program.

(cf. 4115 - Evaluation)

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 and PA 10-91 and PA 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform, PA 13-145, An Act Concerning Revision to the Education Reform Act of 2012 and PA 15-215, An Act Concerning Various Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes)
 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)
 10-151(b) Employment of teachers. Definitions. Tenure, etc. (as amended by P.A. 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform)

Policy adopted: December 7, 2015

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 14
 Bethlehem and Woodbury, Connecticut

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Staff Development

The implementation of Board of Education policy 4131 necessitates, per Connecticut General Statute 10-220a, as amended, the development and implementation of professional development activities, for a minimum of eighteen hours annually. To meet this requirement, the administration will take the following steps:

- a. Establish a professional development and evaluation committee, consisting of certified employees, including their union representatives, and other school personnel deemed appropriate. The required union representation on the committee must include at least one representative from the teachers' and administrators' unions. The committee will be responsible for, the development, evaluation and annual updating of a comprehensive local professional development plan, for certified staff.
- b. The professional development and evaluation committee, in cooperation with the Board of Education, shall develop through mutual agreement a teacher evaluation and support program.

Note: If the Board and Committee are unable to develop a teacher evaluation and support program through mutual agreement, then the Board and Committee shall consider the state's model teacher evaluation and support program which the Board may adopt through mutual agreement. If the Board is unable to adopt the model teacher evaluation and support program through mutual agreement with the professional development and evaluation committee, the Board shall adopt and implement a teacher evaluation and support program developed by the Board, provided such program is consistent with SBE guidelines.

- c. The plan will be directly related to the educational goals proposed by the Board pursuant to C.G.S. 10-220(b), and be developed in full consideration of the priorities and needs related to student outcomes as determined by the State Board of Education.
- d. The members chosen by the Board to be on the Professional Development Committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.
- e. The preponderance of the planned professional development activities will be in a small group or individual group setting which must:
 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, and

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Staff Development (continued)

4. be comprised of professional learning that meets the following criteria:
 - is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards;
 - conducted at the school among educators and facilitated by principals, coaches, mentors, distinguished educators or other appropriate teachers;
 - occurs frequently on an individual basis or among groups of teachers in a job-embedded process of continuous improvement; and
 - includes a repository or best practices for teaching methods developed by educators within each school that is continuously available to such educators for comment and updating.

- f. The staff development experiences may be made available by the Board directly, or through a RESC, a cooperative arrangement with another Board of Education, or through a provider approved by the Commissioner.

- g. It is the responsibility of each teacher, in collaboration with his/her administrator, to identify and participate in appropriate professional development activities to address the needs identified in his/her annual evaluation. A log or other tracking method shall be created or the professional development that has been completed, subject to review and audit by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

- h. The time and location of professional development activities will be in accordance with an agreement between the Board of Education and the exclusive bargaining unit, or in the absence of such agreement or language pertaining to time and location, by a determination of the Board of Education.

- i. The professional development activities must be designed to:
 1. improve the integration of reading instruction, literacy and numeracy enhancement and cultural awareness into instructional practice,
 2. include strategies to improve English language learner instruction into instructional practice,
 3. improve teacher and administrator practice based on results and findings from teacher evaluations reported by the Superintendent or his/her designee, and provide professional growth,
 4. be comprehensive, sustained, and intensive enough to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness in raising student performance,
 5. be aligned with state student academic achievement standards, and
 6. foster collective responsibility for improved student performance

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Staff Development (continued)

- j. The capabilities of certified staff to improve student learning will involve teacher review of curricular content, teaching methods and materials, educational philosophy and goals, social change and related topics.
- k. Professional development activities will include preparation to meet the needs of students of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Planning and implementation of such programs will be done cooperatively by administration, teachers and parent advisory groups.
- l. Administrators and supervisors are to receive training pursuant to their obligations in the evaluation of teachers and administrators under the teacher evaluation and support program. (15 hours for each five year period)
- m. Professional development activities should respond directly to the educational needs of the student body, including:
 - 1. content areas such as language arts, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and enacting; math, social studies and science;
 - 2. methodological areas such as motivation, teaching techniques, including the use of computers in the classroom and classroom management; and second language acquisition; and
 - 3. affective areas of interpersonal relations of students and faculty, student growth and development and staff communication, problem-solving, and decision-making.
- n. The administration will prepare an annual professional development program budget for Board approval.
- o. The effectiveness of the professional development program will be assessed on an annual basis. Such assessment must indicate that the professional development activities:
 - 1. Were planned in response to identified needs;
 - 2. Were provided by qualified instructional personnel, as appropriate;
 - 3. Met the requirements for participation in the activity shared with participants before the commencement of the activity;
 - 4. Are evaluated in terms of effectiveness and contribution to the attainment of school and/or District goals; and
 - 5. Were documented in accordance with the procedures established by the SBE.
- p. School administrators will communicate to individual educators their responsibility to participate in professional development activities agreed upon in the annual evaluation process.

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- q The District, in a manner determined by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will attest that District educators have participated in professional development activities in accordance with his/her annual evaluation plan.

NOTE: *The thrust of professional development focuses more on individual or small group job-embedded processes. School districts will need to evaluate the manner in which the data pertaining to the professional development program is managed and tracked. Previous methods used to track CEUs may be inadequate. Discussion is recommended with teachers to determine how best to document and track professional development activities in an efficient and accurate manner. Software programs should be investigated.*

Connecticut General Statutes 10-220a - In-service Training

A. Required In-service Topics for Certified Personnel

1. Nature and the relationships of drugs and alcohol to health and personality development and procedures for discouraging their abuse.
2. Health and mental health risk reduction education including, but not 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, domestic violence, child abuse and youth suicide.
3. Growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children including but not limited to, children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or learning disabilities who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning and working effectively with special needs children in a regular classroom, including, but not limited to, implementation of student individualized education programs.
4. School violence prevention and conflict resolution and the prevention of and response to youth suicide.
5. Identification and prevention of bullying and response to bullying, as defined in 10-222d, subsection (a) as amended. (Boards that implement an evidence-based model approach approved by the SDE are not required to provide in-service training on prevention of bullying.)
6. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency life-saving procedures.
7. Computer and other information technology as applied to student learning and classroom instruction, communications and data management.
8. Teaching of the language arts, reading and reading readiness for teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive.
9. Second language acquisition in districts required to provide a program of bilingual education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-17f.
10. Requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter regarding reporting of child abuse and neglect.
11. Training in the evaluation of teachers for superintendents and those employees employed in positions requiring an intermediate administrator or supervisory certificate whose duties equal at least 50% of the assigned time. (15 hours every 5 years)
12. Training in the teacher evaluation and support program developed pursuant to subsection (b) of Connecticut General Statute 10-151b, as amended.
13. Certified staff with an endorsement in special education, holding a position requiring such endorsement shall have at least ten hours of training every five years in the implementation of student individualized education programs (IEPs) and the communication of individualized education program procedures to parents/guardians of students who require special education or related services.
14. Training in the detection and recognition of, and evidence-based structured literacy interventions for, students with dyslexia.

Connecticut General Statutes 10-220a - In-service Training

15. Training in cultural competency including instruction concerning awareness of students' background and experience that lead to the development of skills, knowledge and behaviors that enable educators and students to build positive relationships and work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

B. Optional In-Service Topics for Certified Personnel

- Holocaust and genocide education and awareness
- African-American History
- Puerto-Rican History
- Native American History
- Personal Financial Management
- The historical events surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland
- Domestic violence and teen dating violence
- Mental health first aid training