

The board believes a strong relationship exists between the quality of education provided to students and the competency and training of all personnel employed by the school system. The board places a high priority on securing the most competent professional personnel available and, once they are employed, providing them with opportunities for professional growth and development throughout their careers. The goal of professional and staff development programs and opportunities is to improve the instructional program and create a safe learning environment for all students by improving and expanding the skills of the professional staff.

**A. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The superintendent shall provide ongoing professional staff development opportunities. The superintendent shall seek input from employees when developing system-wide programs. The principal shall seek input from school personnel when planning professional development programs for his or her school.

Staff development must be provided, at the system or school level, on the effective delivery of the required curriculum, the incorporation of technology into the student learning process and subjects clearly matched to the goals and objectives of the local safe school plans.

**B. SELF-IMPROVEMENT**

Licensed and professional employees are responsible for self-improvement. These employees are encouraged to seek information and training through staff development programs as well as other opportunities in order to meet this responsibility.

**C. PLANS FOR GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT**

Supervisors and principals also may require employees to enter into plans, including individual, monitored and/or directed growth plans established by the State Board, for professional growth and to improve performance. Plans should set clear expectations and facilitate clear communication between the evaluator and the evaluatee. Goals should be individualized and have a direct impact on instruction.

A performance improvement plan could involve participation in a staff development program or encompass a variety of strategies that are related to professional growth or improving performance. Action plans are required for all licensed employees who receive a “below standard” or “unsatisfactory” rating on a performance evaluation. Policy 7811, Action Plans for Licensed Employees, specifically sets forth the requirements for action plans. A monitored growth plan developed in accordance with State Board policy is required for all teachers who are rated “developing” on one or more standards of the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Rubric. Teachers who are rated “not demonstrated” on any standard or who are rated “developing” on any standard for two

sequential years must be placed on a directed growth plan. These plans satisfy the requirement for an action plan.

A plan required by a supervisor or principal may be appealed following the grievance procedure in policy 1750/7220, Grievance Procedure for Employees, if the employee contends that: (1) the plan is not likely to improve performance; (2) the supervisor or principal abused his or her discretion in developing the plan; or (3) the plan was not developed in conformance with any mandatory procedures.

**D. PAYMENT OF COSTS**

The school system will consider paying reasonable costs, within budget limits, for any courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service training sessions or other sessions an employee is required to attend by the local administration. The employee must seek prior approval for payments.

The school system will not bear the responsibility of the cost of training taken solely for the purposes of licensure renewal.

Legal References: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 106; G.S. 115C-105.47(b)(9), -333(b), State Board of Education Policy TCP-C-004

Cross References: Grievance Procedure for Employees (policy 1750/7220), Action Plans for Licensed Employees (policy 7811)

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