

Dover-Eyota Public Schools Policy 425

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425 STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a staff development program and structure to carry out planning and reporting on staff development that supports improved student learning.

II. ADVISORY STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- A. The Superintendent of Schools, on behalf of the School Board, will establish an Advisory Staff Development Committee to develop a Staff Development Plan. Each school site will develop a site plan that is consistent with the goals of the District Staff Development Plan. The District Advisory Staff Development Committee will evaluate site level staff development efforts.
 - 1. The majority of the membership of the Advisory Staff Development Committee shall consist of teachers representing various grade levels, subject areas, and special education. The Committee also will include nonteaching staff, parents, and administrators.
 - 2. Recommendations for membership on the Advisory Staff Development Committee shall be made by the building principals and appointed by the Superintendent or Superintendent designee. The Superintendent or Superintendent designee shall appoint replacement members of the Advisory Staff Development Committee as necessary.
- B. The Superintendent or Superintendent Designee will direct principals to establish site leadership teams that give input for staff development needed at the site. This must align with the District Staff Development Plan.

III. DUTIES OF THE ADVISORY STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- A. The Advisory Staff Development Committee will develop a Staff Development Plan consistent with the district goals that will be reviewed and subject to approval by the School Board annually.
- B. The Staff Development Plan must contain the following elements:
 - 1. Staff development outcomes that are consistent with the Board goals;
 - 2. The means to achieve the Staff Development outcomes;
 - 3. The procedures for evaluating progress at each school site toward meeting educational outcomes which will be based on goal outcomes and are consistent with relicensure requirements under Minnesota Statutes Section 122A.187;
 - 4. Ongoing staff development activities that contribute toward continuous improvement in achievement of the following goals:
 - a. Improve student achievement of state and local education standards in all areas of the curriculum, including areas of regular academic and applied and experiential learning, by using research-based best practices methods;
 - b. Effectively meet the needs of a diverse student population, including at-risk children, children with disabilities, English learners, and gifted children, within the regular classroom, applied and experiential learning settings, and other settings;
 - c. Provide an inclusive curriculum for a racially, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse student population that is consistent with state education diversity rule and the district's education diversity plan;
 - d. Improve staff collaboration and develop mentoring and peer coaching programs for teachers new to the school or district;
 - e. Effectively teach and model violence prevention policy and curriculum that address early intervention alternatives, issues of harassment, and teach nonviolent alternatives for conflict resolution; and

- f. Effectively deliver digital and blended learning and curriculum and engage students with technology.
- 5. The Staff Development Plan also must:
 - a. Support stable and productive professional communities achieved through ongoing and school-wide progress and growth in teaching practice;
 - b. Emphasize coaching, professional learning communities, classroom action research, and other job-embedded models;
 - c. Maintain a strong subject matter focus premised on students' learning goals consistent with Minnesota Statutes section 120B.125;
 - d. Ensure specialized preparation and learning about issues related to teaching English learners and students with special needs by focusing on long-term systemic efforts to improve educational services and opportunities and raise student achievement; and
 - e. Reinforce national and state standards of effective teaching practice.
- 6. Staff development activities must:
 - a. Focus on the school classroom and research-based strategies that improve student learning;
 - b. Provide opportunities for teachers to practice and improve their instructional skills over time;
 - c. Provide opportunities for teachers to use student data as part of their daily work to increase student achievement;
 - d. Enhance teacher content knowledge and instructional skills, including to accommodate the delivery of digital and blended learning and curriculum and engage students with technology;
 - e. Align with state and local academic standards;
 - f. Provide opportunities to build professional relationships, foster collaboration among principals and staff who provide instruction, and provide opportunities for teacher-to-teacher mentoring;
 - g. Provide teachers of English learners, including English as a second language, and content teachers with differentiated instructional strategies critical for ensuring students long-term academic success, the means to effectively use assessment data on the academic literacy, oral academic language, and English language development of English learners, and skills to support native and English language development across the curriculum; and
 - h. Provide opportunities for staff to learn about current workforce trends, the connections between workforce trends and postsecondary education, and training options, including career and technical education options.
- 7. Staff development activities may include curriculum development and curriculum training programs, and activities that provide teachers and other members of site-based teams training to enhance team performance.
- C. The Advisory Staff Development Committee will assist the sites in developing a site plan consistent with the goals of the Staff Development Plan.
- D. The Advisory Staff Development Committee will evaluate staff development efforts at the site level and will report to the School Board annually the extent to which staff at the site have met the outcomes of the Staff Development Plan.
- E. In addition to developing a Staff Development Plan, the Staff Development Advisory Committee also must develop teacher mentoring programs for teachers new to the profession or school district, including teaching residents, teachers of color, teachers who are American Indian, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs, or experienced teachers in need of

peer coaching. Teacher mentoring programs must be included in or aligned with the school districts teacher evaluation and peer review process under Minnesota Statutes, sections 122A.40, subdivision 8 or 122A.41, subdivision 5.

- F. The Advisory Staff Development Committee shall assist the Curriculum Director in preparing any reports required by the Minnesota Department of Education relating to staff development or teacher mentoring including, but not limited to, the reports referenced in Section VI below.

IV. DUTIES OF THE SITE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- A. Each site shall develop a site plan, consistent with the goals of the Staff Development Plan.
- B. The site must have met the outcomes of the Staff Development Plan. The actual reports to the School Board can be made by the Advisory Staff Development Committee to avoid duplication of effort.

V. STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

- A. Unless the School District is in statutory operating debt or a majority of the School District Board and a majority of its licensed teachers vote to waive the requirement to reserve basic revenue for staff development or the state limits funding, the School District will reserve an amount equal to at least two percent of its basic revenue for (1) teacher development and evaluation under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.40, subdivision 8 or 122A.41, subdivision 5; (2) principal development and evaluation under section 123B.147, subdivision 3; (3) professional development under section 122A.60; (4) inservice education for programs under section 120B.22, subdivision 2; and (5) teacher mentorship under section 122A.70, subdivision 1. To the extent extra funds remain, staff development revenue may be used for development plans, including plans for challenging instructional activities and experiences under section 122A.60, and for curriculum development and programs, other in-service education, teacher's workshops, teacher conferences, the cost of substitute teachers for staff development purposes, preservice and in-service education for special education professional and paraprofessional, and other related costs for staff development efforts. The school district also may use the revenue reserved for staff development for grants to the school district's teachers to pay for coursework and training leading to certification as a concurrent enrollment teacher. To receive a grant, the teacher must be enrolled in a program that includes coursework and training focused on teaching a core subject.
 - 1. The School District will annually allocate a designated amount of revenue to each school site.
 - 2. The School District will annually allocate a designated amount of revenue to make grants to school sites for best practices methods to enhance the district goals. These grants may be used by the school sites for: any purpose authorized by Minn. Stat. § 120B.22, subd. 2, or § 122A.60; the costs of curriculum development and programs; other in-service education; teachers' workshops; teacher conferences; substitute teachers for staff development purposes; and other staff development efforts determined by the Site Professional Development Team.
 - 3. The School District will retain the balance of Staff Development revenue to be used for district-wide staff development efforts.
- B. The Superintendent of Schools shall retain the right to determine if meals are provided with staff inservice activities.
- C. The School District may, in its discretion, expend an additional amount of unreserved revenue for staff development based on its needs. This additional expenditure does not need to follow the allocation described in Part V A above.
- C. Release time provided for teachers to supervise students on field trips and school activities, or independent tasks not associated with enhancing the teacher's knowledge and instructional skills, such as preparing report cards, calculating grades, or organizing classroom materials, may not be counted as staff development time that is financed with staff development reserved revenue under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.61.

- D. The school district may use staff development revenue, special grant programs established by the legislature, or another funding source to pay a stipend to a mentor who may be a current or former teacher who has taught at least three (3) years and is not on an improvement plan. Other initiatives using such funds, or funds available under Minnesota Statutes, sections [124D.861](#) and [124D.862](#), may include:
1. additional stipends as incentives to mentors of color or who are American Indian;
 2. financial supports for professional learning community affinity groups across schools within and between districts for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to come together throughout the school year;
 3. programs for induction aligned with the school district or school mentorship program during the first three (3) years of teaching, especially for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups; or
 4. grants supporting licensed and nonlicensed educator participation in professional development, such as workshops and graduate courses, related to increasing student achievement for students of color and American Indian students in order to close opportunity and achievement gaps.

To the extent the school district receives a grant for any of the above purposes, it will negotiate additional retention strategies or protection from unrequested leave of absences in the beginning years of employment for teachers of color and teachers who are American Indian. Retention strategies may include providing financial incentives for teachers of color and teachers who are American Indian to work in the school or district for at least five (5) years and placing American Indian educators at sites with other American Indian educators and educators of color at sites with other educators of color to reduce isolation and increase opportunity for collegial support.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR USE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- A. On a yearly basis, the Advisory Staff Development Committee, with the assistance of the Site Teams, shall prepare a projected budget setting forth proposals for allocating staff development *and mentoring* funds reserved for each school site. Such budgets shall include, but not be limited to, projections as to the cost of building site training programs, costs of individual staff seminars, and cost of substitutes. (This Plan should coincide with the sites' Improvement Plans.)
- B. Upon approval of the budget by the School Board, the Advisory Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the use of such funds in accordance with the Staff Development Plan (which is consistent with the district goals) and budget. The requested use of staff development funds must meet or make progress toward the goals and objectives of the Staff Development Plan. All costs/expenditures will be reviewed by the School Board and/or Superintendent for consistency with the Staff Development Plan biannually.
- C. Individual requests from staff for leave to attend staff development activities shall be submitted to the building principals to be reviewed according to school district policy, staff procedures, contractual agreement, and the effect on school district operations. Failure to timely submit such requests may be cause for denial of the request.

VII. REPORTING

- A. The School District and Staff Development Committee shall prepare a report of the previous fiscal year's staff development activities and expenditures as part of the school district's World's Best Workforce report.
 1. The report must include assessment and evaluation data indicating progress toward district and site staff development goals based on teaching and learning outcomes, including the percentage of teachers and other staff involved in instruction who participate in effective staff development activities.
 2. The report will provide a breakdown of expenditures for:

- a. curriculum development and curriculum training programs;
- b. staff development training models, workshops, and conferences; and
- c. the cost of releasing teachers or providing substitute teachers for staff development purposes.

The report must indicate whether the expenditures were incurred at the district level or the school site level, and whether the school site expenditures were made possible by the grants to school sites that demonstrate exemplary use of allocated staff development revenue. These expenditures must be reported using the uniform financial and accounting and reporting standards (UFARS).

3. The report will be signed by the superintendent and staff development chair.

- B. To the extent the school district received a grant for mentorship activities described in Section V.D., by June 30 of each year after receiving a grant, the site staff development committee must submit a report to the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board on program, efforts that describes mentoring and induction activities and assesses the impact of these programs on teacher effectiveness and retention.