

BlueSky Policy Number: 425
Adopted: November 10, 2010
Revised:

Staff Development Policy

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. STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- A. The School Board will delegate the ability to establish a Staff Development Committee to the Executive Director which will develop a Staff Development Plan and evaluate staff development efforts throughout the district.
 - 1. The majority of the membership of the Staff Development Committee shall consist of teachers representing various grade levels, subject areas, special education and administration. The Committee may also include nonteaching staff, and parents.
 - 2. Members of the Staff Development Committee shall be voluntary pending approval of the executive director. Committee members shall serve when possible a two-year term. The Executive Director shall appoint replacement members of the Staff Development Committee as soon as possible following the resignation, death, serious illness or removal of a member from the Committee.

III. DUTIES OF THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- A. The Staff Development Committee will develop a Staff Development Plan which will be reviewed and subject to approval by the Executive Director annually.
- B. The Staff Development Plan must contain the following elements:
 - 1. Staff development outcomes which are consistent with the education outcomes as may be determined periodically by the School Board;
 - 2. The means to achieve the Staff Development outcomes;

3. The procedures for evaluating progress toward meeting educational outcomes;
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 by using best practices methods;
 - b. Effectively meet the needs of a diverse student population, including at-risk children, children with disabilities, and gifted children, within the regular classroom and other settings;
 - c. Provide an inclusive curriculum for a racially, ethnically, 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. Provide teachers and other members of management teams with appropriate management and financial management skills.
5. 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;

- e. Align with state and local academic standards;
 - f. Provide opportunities to build professional relationships, foster collaboration among administration and staff who provide instruction, and provide opportunities for teacher-to-teacher mentoring; and
 - g. Align with the plan, if any, for an alternative teacher professional pay system.
6. Staff development activities may include curriculum development and curriculum training programs, and activities that provide teachers and other staff members training to enhance team performance.
7. The school district may implement other staff development activities required by law and activities associated with professional teacher compensation models.

[Note: To the extent the School Board offers K-12 teachers the opportunity for more staff development training under Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, Subds. 7 and 7a, or Minn. Stat. § 122A.41, Subds. 4 and 4a, such additional days of staff development should include peer mentoring, peer gathering, continuing education, professional development, or other training which enable teachers to achieve the staff development outcomes enumerated above in Section III.B.4.]

- C. The Staff Development Committee will evaluate staff development efforts at the site level and will report to the Executive Director on a bi-annual basis the extent to which staff at the site have met the outcomes of the Staff Development Plan.
- D. The Staff Development Committee shall assist the School District in preparing any reports required by the Department of Education relating to staff development including, but not limited to, the reports referenced in Section VI. below.
- E. If the Executive Director determines that staff development outcomes are not being met, it may withhold a portion of the initial allocation of revenue referenced in Section IV. below.

IV. 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, the School District will reserve an amount equal to at least two percent of its basic revenue for: in-service education for violence

prevention programs to help students learn how to resolve conflicts within their families and communities in non-violent, effective ways; staff development plans; curriculum development and programs; other in-service education; teachers' workshops; teacher conferences; the cost of substitute teachers for staff development purposes; preservice and in-service education for special education professionals and paraprofessionals; and other related costs for staff development efforts.

1. The School District will allocate 50 percent of the reserved revenue on a per teacher basis and will retain such funds for each school site until used.
2. The School District will allocate 25 percent of the reserved revenue to make grants to school sites for best practices methods. 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. Criteria used by the School District in awarding best practice staff development grants to sites include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Grant application includes objectives which have a clear connection to the building/district Staff Development Plan;
 - b. Grant application includes provisions for discussion, collaborating, informing, and coaching one another on an ongoing basis;
 - c. Grant application provides for ongoing assessment of professional practice and student performance; and
 - d. Grant application specifies best practices to be addressed.
3. The School District may retain 25 percent of the revenue to be used for district-wide staff development efforts.
- B. 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. If the School District operates a career teacher program, it will reserve from its basic revenue an amount equal to five dollars (\$5) times the number of resident pupil units to provide staff development for the career teacher program.

- D. 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 Minn. Stat. § 122A.61.

V. PROCEDURE FOR USE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- A. On a yearly basis, the Staff Development Committee shall prepare a projected budget setting forth proposals for allocating staff development 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.
- B. Upon approval of the budget by the School Board, the Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the use of such funds in accordance with the Staff Development Plan 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 Executive Director for consistency with the Staff Development Plan on a bi-annual basis.
- C. Individual requests from staff for leave to attend staff development activities shall be submitted and 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.

VI. REPORTING

- A. By October 15 of each year, the School District and site staff development committee shall prepare a report of the previous fiscal year's staff development activities and expenditures and submit it to the Commissioner of the Department of Education (Commissioner).
 - 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 also 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).

- B. The School District will utilize the reporting form and/or system designated by the Commissioner. The report will be signed by the superintendent and staff development chair.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120A.41 (Length of School Year; Days of Instruction)

Minn. Stat. § 120A.415 (Extended School Calendar)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.22, Subd. 2 (Violence Prevention Education)

Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, Subds. 7 and 7a (Employment; Contracts; Termination - Additional Staff Development and Salary)

Minn. Stat. § 122A.41, Subds. 4 and 4a (Teacher Tenure Act; Cities of the First Class; Definitions - Additional Staff Development and Salary)

Minn. Stat. § 122A.60 (Staff Development Program)

Minn. Stat. § 122A.61 (Reserved Revenue for Staff Development)

Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, Subds. 2 and 2b (General Education Revenue)

Cross References: