

PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Board of Education of the Columbia School District recognizes the relationship between high-quality professional development and student achievement and therefore commits to a high-quality professional staff development program. The program will be aligned with the current Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and based on available student achievement data and the results of needs assessment at the school and district level.

In support of this commitment the Board will:

1. Establish a Professional Development Committee (PDC) that will create and implement a Professional Development Plan (PDP) based on the district's CSIP. The PDP must be approved by the Board prior to implementation.
2. Allocate adequate funding for high-quality professional development activities as defined by law.
3. Provide leave and dismissal time for approved professional growth activities and reimbursement for expenses related to conferences and visitations.
4. Provide opportunities for increased compensation or advancement on the salary schedule with additional education or training in accordance with Board policies and procedures.
5. Provide opportunities for collective participation by staff members in the same school community, subject area, grade level or department.

Local in-service courses for teachers and other professional employees shall be established under the supervision of the Chief Academic Officer.

One (1) hour of credit for advancement on the salary schedule may be granted for each 16 hours of participation in in-service courses. A prorated amount of credit may be granted for participation in courses of fewer than 16 hours.

Staff members are encouraged to participate in workshops or seminars, related to their job responsibilities and school and/or program improvement plans, sponsored by groups outside the Columbia School District. Credit for salary schedule advancement may be granted for such participation, if approved by the Director of School Improvement.

Professional Development for Teachers

The professional development program for teachers will:

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1. Be sustained over time.
2. Focus on specific content areas.
3. Focus on instructional practices.
4. Support the collective learning of teachers.
5. Align with district, school and teacher goals.
6. Be infused with active learning and provide teachers the opportunity to practice and apply new knowledge.

Professional development for teachers will include a beginning teacher assistance program and a mentoring program that meets or exceeds the standards established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Professional Development for Administrators

Professional development activities will be provided for superintendents, principals and other district personnel charged with administrative functions. As with professional development for teachers, professional development for administrators will be available on an individual basis and as part of a collective group.

Professional development for administrators will align with Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards and focus on support of classroom instruction.

Administrators will participate in a formalized district mentoring program.

Program Evaluation

The PDC will conduct an annual evaluation of the professional development program to determine whether professional development is aligned with the district's CSIP and identified instructional strategies. To the extent possible, the evaluation will determine the effect of the professional development program on student achievement as measured by assessments of student mastery of grade-level expectations.

Professional Staff Travel

Staff members of the Columbia School District shall be eligible for educational travel. The general responsibilities and the leadership role of the staff members will be of prime importance in considering requests for travel.

The travel expense allowance may include the necessary costs for transportation, food, lodging and registration fees. The Board of Education shall pay a substitute during the absence of the staff member, if a substitute is necessary.

Administrative guidelines shall be developed for the implementation of this policy.

Credit for Education Travel

The Board of Education recognizes that educational travel may enrich and stimulate the teacher. The primary purpose of travel is to gain educational experience relevant to the work of the teacher. Therefore, credit may be awarded under the following conditions:

Amount of Credit: A minimum of three (3) weeks' travel (travel taken within a period of not less than three weeks) is applicable for credit. Each week of travel shall be considered equivalent to one (1) college hour of credit for purposes of placement on the salary schedule.

A maximum of eight (8) weeks' travel credit may be accumulated during a five-year period. A total of 16 weeks' travel credit may be earned during a teacher's tenure in the Columbia School District.

Credit may not be awarded for either overlapping travel experiences or where there is a duplicate itinerary for which travel credit has already been received.

No credit will be provided for travel if the teacher receives regular college credit or receives major compensation from an organization, group, or individual or if travel is during the regular contractual period.

Domestic and Foreign Travel: Domestic travel is defined as travel within the United States of America but outside the State of Missouri. Domestic and foreign travel shall be recognized for credit providing the regular qualifications are met.

Special projects which require the State of Missouri for their locale may be considered for credit.

Application to receive credit for educational travel shall be made to the Director of School Improvement.

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Note: The reader is encouraged to check the index located at the beginning of this section for other pertinent policies and to review administrative procedures and/or forms for related information.

Adopted: 03/03/1997

Revised: 07/11/2003; 06/09/2008

MSIP Refs: 6.1.2, 6.2.2, 6.4.3, 6.7

Legal Refs: §§ 160.530, 163.021.4, 168.400, RSMo.
5 C.S.R. 80-850.045

Columbia School District No. 93, Columbia, Missouri