

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

“Staff development” is viewed by the Board of Education (Board) as a continuous systematic effort to improve educational programs in Regional School District No. 7 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,
- includes 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,

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- 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.

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, 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 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 a teacher.

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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, 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 C.G.S. 10-220a.

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, for the school year commencing July 1, 2013, prior to any evaluation conducted under the teacher evaluation and support program contained within P.A. 12-116, as amended, An Act Concerning Educational Reform, shall provide training for all evaluators and orientation to all certified District employees related 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)

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Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

- 10-27 Exchange of professional personnel and students.
- 10-220a In-Service training. (as amended by PA 04-227, PA 08-160, and June 19 Special Session, Public Act No. 09-1 and PA-10-91 and PA 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform and PA 13-145, An Act Concerning Revision to the Education Reform Act of 2012).
- 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).

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. Second language acquisition in districts required to provide a program of bilingual education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-17f.
9. Requirements and obligations of a mandated reporter regarding reporting of child abuse and neglect.
10. 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)
11. Training in the teacher evaluation and support program adopted pursuant to subsection (b) of Connecticut General Statutes 10-151b, as amended.
12. 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 educator program procedures to parents/guardians of students who require special education or related services.

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

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