

IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOR LICENSED EMPLOYEES

The New Hanover County Board of Education expects all licensed employees to maintain high levels of performance. When employees do not meet these standards the Superintendent and administrative staff will address any identified performance deficiencies.

Improvement Plans Required

The Superintendent or designee will develop and implement an Improvement Plan for each licensed employee who is rated “not demonstrated” on any standard on the Summary Rating Form or is rated “developing” on one or more standards on the Summary Rating Form for two (2) consecutive evaluations.

Improvement Plans for Teachers

Monitored Growth Plans

The Superintendent, designee, or principal may place teachers on a Monitored Growth Plan at any time to address performance concerns. Teachers shall be placed on a Monitored Growth Plan whenever they are:

- Rated “Developing” on one (1) or more standards on the Teacher Summary Rating Form; and
- Are not recommended for dismissal, demotion, or non-renewal.

A Monitored Growth Plan shall identify the standards and elements to be improved, the goals to be accomplished and the strategies the teacher should undertake to achieve proficiency, and a timeline for the completion of the required strategies.

Directed Growth Plans

The Superintendent, designee, or principal may place a teacher on a Directed Growth Plan to address serious performance concerns or when the teacher does not consistently demonstrate proficient performance while on a Monitored Growth Plan. Teachers shall be placed on a Directed Growth Plan whenever they are:

- Rated “Not Demonstrated” on any standard on the Teacher Summary Rating Form; or “Developing” on one (1) or more standards on the Teacher Summary Rating Form for two (2) sequential years; and
- Not recommended for dismissal, demotion, or non-renewal.

A Directed Growth Plan shall, at a minimum, identify the standards and elements to be improved, the goals to be accomplished and the strategies the teacher should undertake to achieve proficiency, and a timeline for the completion of the required strategies.

Mandatory Improvement Plans

In order for the school system to retain the employment of teachers who are not proficient in all

standards, the teachers shall demonstrate significant and sustained improvement to attain proficient performance on a Monitored Growth Plan or a Directed Growth Plan. A Monitored and/or Directed Growth Plan provide a teacher ample opportunity to attain proficient performance. In order to ensure that students receive quality instruction, a teacher who has not attained proficient performance through the completion of a Monitored and/or Directed Growth plan ordinarily will be recommended for dismissal.

In extraordinary situations, the Superintendent or designee has the discretion to retain a teacher who has not demonstrated proficient performance despite the benefit of a Monitored and/or Directed Growth Plan by placing the teacher on a Mandatory Improvement Plan. The Superintendent or designee may also place a teacher on a Mandatory Improvement Plan if it is determined that a Monitored or Directed Growth Plan will not adequately address the deficiencies in the teacher's performance. Before placing a teacher on a Mandatory Improvement Plan, the Superintendent or designee must determine that a Monitored or Directed Growth Plan will not adequately address the deficiencies in the teacher's performance.

A Mandatory Improvement Plan will provide the teacher with notice of specific performance areas that have substantial deficiencies and a set of strategies, including the specific support to be provided, so that the teacher, within a specified period of time, will satisfactorily resolve such deficiencies. The teacher on a Mandatory Improvement Plan may receive an observation from a qualified observer in accordance with law. Before a Mandatory Improvement Plan is implemented, the teacher's supervisor shall submit the plan to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources or designee, for review.

Mandatory Improvement Plans shall be designed to be completed within 90 (ninety) instructional days or before the beginning of the next school year and shall be implemented within thirty (30) days after the employee's evaluation or at the beginning of the next school year.

Employees in Low-performing Schools

If a certified employee, including the school administrator, in a low-performing school receives a rating on any standard on an evaluation that is below proficient or otherwise represents unsatisfactory or below standard performance, the evaluator(s) shall recommend to the Superintendent or designee that the employee be:

- Dismissed or demoted; or
- Placed on a Mandatory Improvement Plan. If placement on a Mandatory Improvement Plan is supported, the following shall apply:

The improvement plan shall be developed by the individual(s) who evaluated the employee or by the employee's supervisor. If, however, the evaluation was conducted by an assistance team or an assessment team, the team shall develop the plan in collaboration with the employee's supervisor. The improvement plan shall be designed to be completed within 90 (ninety) instructional days or before the beginning of the next school year. The employee does not have a right to an observation from a qualified observer. Upon completion of the improvement plan, the Superintendent, designee, or assessment team shall reevaluate the employee. If the employee has failed to attain proficiency in all performance standards, or demonstrate sufficient improvement toward proficiency in all performance standards as articulated by the Mandatory Improvement Plan, the Superintendent shall recommend dismissal or demotion.

Inadequate Performance

A licensed employee is subject to dismissal for any of the grounds set forth by law including “inadequate performance.” Inadequate performance shall mean:

- The failure to perform at a proficient level on any standard of the evaluation instrument;
or
- Otherwise performing in a manner that is below standard. However, for a probationary teacher, a performance rating below proficient may or may not be deemed adequate at that stage of development by a Superintendent or designee. For a career teacher, a performance rating below proficient shall constitute inadequate performance unless the principal noted on the evaluation instrument that the teacher is making adequate progress toward proficiency given the circumstances.

This Policy does not create any additional rights for certified employees. The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures to enforce this Policy.

In compliance with federal laws, New Hanover County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

LEGAL REFS: N.C.G.S. §115C-333, N.C.G.S. §115C-325

CROSS REF: Public School Laws of North Carolina

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