

## Personnel

### Staff Development and Mentoring

#### I. Purpose

This policy establishes a program and structure to carry out planning and reporting on staff professional learning that supports improved student learning.

#### II. General Statement of Policy

The school district is committed to facilitating, nurturing, and promoting opportunities to increase the development of all district staff. The district will create a District Staff Development Committee that develops and implements the learning plans of the district. The staff development plans will align with the district's mission and goals.

#### III. District Staff Development Committee (the "District Committee") and Site Staff Development Teams (the "Site Teams")

A. The district will establish a District Committee to develop a District Staff Development Plan (the "District Plan"), assist Site Teams in developing an aligned Site Staff Development Plan (the "Site Plan"), and evaluate staff development efforts at the site level.

1. The majority of the membership of the District Committee will consist of teachers representing various grade levels, subject areas, and special education. The District Committee will also include non-teaching staff, parents/guardians, and administrators representative of the school and parent community.

#### B. Establishing Site Teams

1. Members of the Site Teams will be appointed by building administration based on site and staff needs. Building administration will appoint replacement members of the Site Teams as soon as possible following the resignation, death, serious illness, or removal of a member from the team.
2. The majority of the Site Teams will be teachers representing various grade levels, subject areas, and special education.

#### IV. Duties of the District Staff Development-Committee

- A. On an annual basis, the District Committee will develop and review a District Plan. The District Plan will align with the school district's mission and goals. The school board will approve the District Plan as a part of the World's Best Workforce report each year.
- B. The District Plan will contain the following elements:
  - 1. Staff development outcomes that are consistent with the defined education outcomes in the Edina Strategic Plan as may be determined periodically by the board;
  - 2. The means to achieve the District Plan outcomes;
  - 3. The procedures for evaluating progress at each school site toward meeting educational outcomes consistent with re-licensure requirements under state law;
  - 4. Ongoing staff development 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 students, students with special needs, multilingual learners, and talent development students, within the regular classroom, applied and experiential learning settings, and other settings;
    - c. Provide an inclusive curriculum for a diverse student body 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 behavior expectations that ensure a positive learning environment and utilizes curriculum and/or resources that address early intervention alternatives and issues of harassment, teach nonviolent alternatives for conflict resolution, and support strong social and emotional learning.

- f. Effectively deliver digital learning through blended and online formats; and
  - g. Provide teachers and other members of site-based leadership teams with appropriate management and financial management skills.
5. The District Plan will also:
- a. Support stable and productive professional communities achieved through ongoing and schoolwide 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 state law;
  - d. Ensure specialized preparation on culturally responsive practices and learning about issues related to teaching multilingual 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 will:
- 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. Align with the plan, if any, of the district or site for an alternative teacher professional pay system;
  - h. Provide teachers with differentiated instructional strategies critical for ensuring students' long-term academic success, the means to effectively use assessment data on academic literacy, oral academic language, and English language development of multilingual learners, and skills to support native and English language development across the curriculum; and
  - i. 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 and credentialing.
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.
8. The district may implement other staff development activities required by law and activities associated with professional teacher compensation models.
- C. The District Committee will assist Site Teams in developing Site Plans consistent with the goals and outcomes of the District Plan.
- D. The District Committee will evaluate staff development efforts at the site level and will report to the board on an annual basis the extent to which staff at the site have met the outcomes of the District Plan.
- E. In addition to developing a District Plan, the District Committee will also develop teacher mentoring programs for teachers new to the profession or 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 will be included in or aligned with the district's teacher evaluation and peer review processes under state law.

- F. The District Committee will assist the district 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 IX. below.

V. Duties of the Site Team

- A. Each Site Team will develop a Site Plan, consistent with the goals of the District Plan. District leadership will review the Site Plans for alignment on an annual basis.
- B. The Site Team will demonstrate to district leadership the extent to which staff at the site have met the outcomes of the Site Plan. The actual reports to the school board can be made by the District Committee to avoid duplication of effort.
- C. If district leadership determines that staff development outcomes are not being met, it may withhold a portion of the initial allocation of revenue referenced in Section VI. below.

VI. Staff Development Funding

- A. Unless the school district is in statutory operating debt or a majority of the school board and a majority of its licensed teachers annually vote to waive the requirement to reserve basic revenue for staff development, the 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) in-service 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, pre-service and in-service education for special education professionals and paraprofessionals, and other related costs for staff development efforts. The district also may use the revenue reserved for staff development for grants to the district's teachers to pay for coursework and training leading to certification as either a college in the schools teacher or 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.

- B. The district may, in its discretion, expend an additional amount of unreserved revenue for staff development based on its needs.
- 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 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 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 non-licensed 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 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.

VII. Procedure for Use of Staff Development Funds

- A. On an annual basis, the District Staff Development-Committee, with the assistance of the Site Teams, will prepare a projected budget setting forth proposals for allocating staff development and mentoring funds reserved for each school site. Such budgets will 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 District Committee will be responsible for monitoring the use of such funds in accordance with the District Plan, Site Plans, and budgets. The requested use of staff development funds will meet or make progress toward the goals and objectives of the District Plan and Site Plans. All costs/expenditures will be reviewed by district leadership for alignment on an annual basis.
- C. Individual requests from staff for leave to attend staff development activities will be submitted and reviewed according to district policy, staff procedures, contractual agreement, and the effect on district operations. Failure to timely submit such requests may be cause for denial of the request.

VIII. Paraprofessionals, Title I Aides, and Other Instructional Support Staff

- A. The school district will provide a minimum of eight hours of paid orientation or professional development annually to all paraprofessionals. Six of the eight hours will be completed before the first instructional day of the school year or within 30 days of hire.
- B. The orientation or professional development will be relevant to the employee's occupation and may include collaboration time with classroom teachers and planning for the school year.
- C. For paraprofessionals who provide direct support to students, at least 50 percent of the professional development or orientation will be dedicated to meeting the requirements of this section. Professional development for paraprofessionals may also address other requirements of state law.
- D. A school administrator will provide an annual certification of compliance with this requirement to the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner.

IX. Reporting

- A. The school district and District Committee will prepare a report of the

previous fiscal year's staff development activities and expenditures as part of the district's World's Best Workforce report.

1. The report will 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 will also 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 will 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 district receives a grant for mentorship activities described in Section VI.D., by June 30 of each year after receiving a grant, the District Committee will 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.

Legal References:

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

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

Minn. Stat. § 120B.125 (Planning for Students' Successful Transition to Postsecondary Education and Employment; Personal Learning Plans)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.22, subd. 2 (In-Service Training)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.363, subd. 3 (Initial Training)

Minn. Stat. § 122A.187 (Expiration and Renewal)

Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, subds. 7, 7a and 8 (Termination of Contract After Probationary

Period; Additional Staff Development and Salary; Development, Evaluation, and Peer Coaching for Continuing Contract Teachers)  
Minn. Stat. § 122A.41, subds. 4, 4a and 5 (Period of Service After Probationary Period: Discharge or Demotion; Additional Staff Development and Salary; Development, Evaluation, and Peer Coaching for Continuing Contract Teachers)  
Minn. Stat. § 122A.60 (Staff Development Program)  
Minn. Stat. § 122A.61 (Reserved Revenue for Staff Development)  
Minn. Stat. § 122A.70 (Teacher Mentorship and Retention of Effective Teachers)  
Minn. Stat. § 123B.147, subd. 3 (Principals - Duties; Evaluation)  
Minn. Stat. § 124D.861 (Achievement and Integration for Minnesota)  
Minn. Stat. § 124D.862 (Achievement and Integration Revenue)  
Minn. Stat. § 126C.10, subds. 2 and 2b (General Education Revenue - Basic Revenue and Extended Time Revenue)  
Minn. Stat. § 126C.13, subd. 5 (General Education Aid - Uses of Revenue)

Policy  
adopted: 01/26/09  
revised: 10/21/13  
revised: 02/27/17  
revised: 03/07/22  
revised: 01/08/24

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 273  
Edina, Minnesota