

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROGRAM MANUAL

For Classified Employees



**A Guide to Implementation
And Application**

Revised: April 25, 2024

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Dear CSEA Bargaining Unit Member,

This manual was developed to provide you with an overview of the professional Growth Program available to you as a member of CSEA. An update of this will be provided as changes occur. Please read it carefully and keep it for your reference. This manual contains official grant application forms.

The committee members responsible for reviewing and processing applications for the Professional Growth Program are as follows:

**For the District
Theresa Rubio
Linda Moreno
Ernesto Centeno
Anthony Nahale**

**For CSEA
Sharlene Bang
Vicki Walshe
Michelle Suarez
Martha Jauregui (CSEA President)**

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROGRAM

The intent of the program is to assist employees in developing their skills, talents, and responsibilities in relationship to their job duties and prospective job duties within the District by encouraging CSEA bargaining unit members to participate in appropriate courses at a university, college, or adult school, institutes, conferences, seminars and workshops.

Full-time and part-time permanent classified employee members in the bargaining unit shall be eligible to request participation in the Professional Growth Program.

Procedures for Applying:

- A. Applications to request participation in the Professional Growth Program shall be available through Linda Moreno (Ext. 2032) in the Fiscal Services Department and/or CSEA site representative. **APPLICATIONS ARE INCLUDED IN THIS MANUAL.**
- B. Employees shall complete the application with special emphasis placed on:
 - Name, department, and job classification.
 - The description of the class or activity and how this will benefit you and/or the District.
 - Date and location of class or activity.
 - Supply a copy of the agenda/program of the conference, workshop, seminar, class or activity and complete the section of authorized expenses requested.
 - Submit a signed Travel Request by your principal or department head if you're interested in attending a conference, workshop or seminar during work hours, along with your completed application.
 - Application must be submitted with original signature (No faxes accepted.)
- C. Application forms must be submitted to the Professional Growth Committee Chair via the Fiscal Services Department no less than three (3) business days prior to the class or event beginning. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**

Helpful Hint: To ensure adherence to the 3-day submission rule, if actual amounts are not available, it is highly recommended that interested participants submit their application with an **estimated amount** to be approved 3 business days before the start of class or workshop.

- D. The CSEA bargaining unit member may be requested to attend the Professional Growth Committee meeting to discuss their application for clarification before participation in the program will be considered.
- E. The Professional Growth Committee shall notify the employee, by written correspondence, of the action taken on his/her request.
- F. Failure to submit an application prior to participation in the proposed activity will result in denial of application by the Professional Growth Committee.
- G. All denied applications are final and not subject to discussion or grievance.
- H. Any attempt to grieve a denied application will result in permanent disqualification from the CSEA Professional Growth Program.

Guidelines:

- A. Funds will be distributed among applicants as equitably as possible according to availability of funds.
- B. Items not covered under Professional Growth funding are student body fees, parking fees, supplies, equipment, mileage, gas, car maintenance, meals, hotel accommodations, or CPR/First Aid related fees.
- C. Applicants taking college, university or adult school classes, are required to receive a grade of "C" or better for each class taken in connection with the Professional Growth Program in order to receive reimbursement. A copy of your grades will be required for verification.
- D. Original receipts are required for reimbursement purposes.
- E. Claims must be submitted within thirty (30) days after completion of course(s) or activity.
- F. If you have received an award but have dropped your classes, contact the Professional Growth Chairperson (Fiscal Supervisor) and let him/her know so the funds can be made available to other participants eligible for the program.
- G. Conferences or workshops may not be repeated if there are no changes to the content offered.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROGRAM

ARTICLE XXII OF CSEA CONTRACT

- A. A Professional Growth Committee is hereby established to be composed of three (3) members appointed by the District and three (3) members appointed by the CSEA President. The professional growth committee shall meet to review and vote on employee requests under this Article at least one time every two months or as needed. The District shall contribute accordingly to cover all expenditures awarded by the Professional Growth Committee to bargaining unit members.
- B. The intent of the program is to assist employees in developing their skills that relate to their job duties and prospective job duties in the District by allowing bargaining unit members to participate in appropriate courses: university, college, adult school, institutes, conferences, seminars, workshops, and training within the state of California.
- C. Expenses will be compensated for as authorized in the Professional Growth Manual. An individual employee may request up to three thousand dollars (\$3,000) per fiscal year (07/01/XX to 06/30/XX). Authorized expenses shall include cost of tuition, conference or seminar fees, costs of textbooks or other written materials and portions thereof. Any other expenses shall not be covered by Professional Growth funding.
- D. A Professional Growth Manual that includes application forms will be distributed through District mail by the District to every bargaining unit employee at no cost to the employee or CSEA.
- E. The decision of the committee on any application is final and not subject to review or grievance.

MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROGRAM

We are pleased to let you know about a chance for you to apply for a grant which would reimburse you for approved expenses related to professional growth.

The following questions and answers are designed to help you become acquainted with this process and to encourage you to apply.

- Q. What is the Professional Growth Program?**
- A. As defined in Articles XXII of the CSEA Master Agreement with the District, this program includes reimbursement/funding for educational programs including college courses, conferences, seminars, etc.**
- Q. What is a Professional Growth Award?**
- A. A Professional Growth Award is a sum of money awarded to a CSEA member who has applied for a grant. These awards are competitive, and in most cases, are paid upon completion of the activity with verification of grade.**
- Q. Where does the money come from?**
- A. The money is provided in the District's budget as a result of being negotiated in the Master Agreement between CSEA and the District.**
- Q. What is the budget for Professional Growth Awards?**
- A. Each CSEA member can apply for up to \$3,000 per fiscal year.**
- Q. How do I apply for an award?**
- A. Applications for Professional Growth Awards are available through CSEA District website. Applications must be completed and submitted to Linda Moreno in the Fiscal Services Department three (3) business days prior to the beginning of the class or activity.**
- Q. Who makes the decisions about the awards?**
- A. The Professional Growth Committee which consists of three (3) members appointed by the District and three (3) members appointed by CSEA. The decision of the committee on any application is final and not subject to review or grievance.**
- Q. How will I know if I was approved for an Award?**

- A. All applicants will be notified of the result of their grant application request through District or U.S. mail.
- Q. If I am approved for an award, how do I get the money?
- A. Upon completion of the approved activity, you must submit a claim form which comes with your grant letter. The District will then reimburse you up to the level of your approved expenses.
- Q. What if I can't afford to pay in advance for the activity?
- A. Unfortunately, CSEA does not provide assistance for hardship circumstances.
- Q. When can I apply?
- A. Applications may be submitted anytime during the year but must be submitted no later than three (3) business days before the activity begins.
- Q. May Professional Growth activities take place on released time?
- A. No. Such activities are intended to be done on the employee's own time. Exceptions may be considered by the committee when the request for the exception is supported by the applicant's supervisor (such as in the case of a conference). A Travel Request, signed by your supervisor, must be submitted with your application. CSEA will not pick up the cost of a substitute. This will be a school site or department responsibility should a substitute be required.
- Q. May I submit letters of recommendation?
- A. While letters of recommendation are not required, the committee will accept and consider any that are attached to the application when submitted.
- Q. What kinds of expenses are included in a grant?
- A. Expenses related to tuition, books and health/lab fees as it relates to college courses and registration or conference fees as it relates to workshops.
- Q. What kinds of expenses are not covered under Professional Growth funding?
- A. Student body fees, parking fees, supplies, equipment, mileage, gas, car maintenance, hotel accommodations and meals (except conference meals which are included in the price of registration).
- Q. Can I take any kind of class or workshop?

A. No. Classes and workshops must be geared towards positions currently held in the District (example: schooling to become a firefighter would not be acceptable as the District does not employ this type of position).

Q. May I repeat a course or workshop?

A. For schooling, you may repeat the class if you receive a “D” or “F” grade as you do not receive reimbursements for grades less than a “C”. For conferences or workshops, you may not repeat a course if the content is the same as when the course was originally taken.

NORWALK - LAMIRADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
 CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROGRAM APPLICATION

Name: _____ Job Classification: _____
 Division/Department: _____ Ext: _____
 Home Address: _____ Telephone: _____
 _____ E-mail: _____

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AWARDS ARE GIVEN FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS. PLEASE MARK THE REASON(S) THAT APPLY TO YOU.

- To obtain training in another classified area in which the District offers employment.
- To improve communication skills.
- To improve literacy.
- To improve skills in current field.
- To improve interpersonal skills.
- To earn credits toward a degree. Type of Degree? _____
- Job Renewal.
- Other (Please specify) _____

Title of Class or Activity? _____
 Beginning date of class or activity? _____ Ending Date? _____
 Time? _____ Location? _____
 Brief description of class or activity _____

How will this class or activity help you and/or the District? _____

AUTHORIZED EXPENSES REQUESTED

<u>COURSES</u>	<u>CONFERENCE, WORKSHOP, SEMINARS, ETC.</u>	
Tuition	\$ _____	Registration Fees \$ _____
Textbooks	\$ _____	
Lab/Health Fees	\$ _____	
 TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED	 \$ _____	

*****REMINDER: CSEA DOES NOT REIMBURSE FOR SUPPLY ITEMS**

I certify that this is an accurate estimate of expenses. If this request is approved, I agree to submit all **original itemized** receipts and verification of grades for reimbursement upon completion of the approved activity. Actual expenses, if more than estimated, will not be paid.

***ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH A COPY OF THE CLASS SCHEDULE (WHICH INCLUDES THE START DATE OF CLASS) 3 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO CLASSES BEGINNING. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS!**

 Employee's Signature Date Signed
SUBMIT COMPLETED FORMS TO LINDA MORENO IN THE BUSINESS OFFICE

NORWALK-LA MIRADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AWARD

CLAIM STATEMENT

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Address: _____

Cell/Home Number: _____

Professional Growth Activity: _____

Work Location: _____

DESCRIPTION OF EXPENSE	
Description of Classes, Conference, Workshop	Cost

Signature of Applicant Signature of Chairperson

Please submit this form along with your receipts and verification of grades to Linda Moreno in the Fiscal Services Office.

