**New ARA Requirements**

**Implementation Dates:**

With the recent changes in the MTA contract and to expedite the application and approval process of the two types of ARA projects, these new requirements will be implemented for any project beginning on July 1, 2018 and continuing forward into future school years.

**Goal Alignment:**

There are two types of ARA projects identified for payment by the District. These projects must be aligned to the district and/or building goals. The district goals are delineated in the strategic plan and the building’s goals are developed each year by the building’s leadership team with final approval by the district office. Each year every teacher/therapist is required to develop an annual professional goal which should be aligned to these goals or to a specific skillset that the teacher/therapist needs to learn to become a more proficient professional. In some cases, the ARA may be aligned to the professional goal.

**Types of ARA Projects:**

There are two types of ARA projects recognized by the District. The first type is identified as the ARA (Workshop/Course Request). Typically, this ARA is scheduled for fifteen (hours) of professional development outside the regular work time of the teacher over a specific time period. It can include a professional workshop/course provided by a university, college, professional organization and/or teacher center. Many of these organizations are listed in the District’s Professional Development Plan as approved providers and teachers should access this as a handy resource. Under no circumstances will webinars be approved for an ARA project.

The other type of ARA project is identified as the ARA (Curriculum Work). Typically, this ARA is scheduled for fifteen (hours) of curriculum development over a specific time period outside the regular work time of the teacher. This project may be completed by an individual or group of teachers. All ARA (Curriculum Work) will be completed on district property in a location assigned by an administrator. The teacher must document the actual time periods for this project for auditing purposes.

**Timelines for Submission, Completion and Approval:**

The **ARA (Workshop/Course Request)** form found in the Frontline My Learning Plan System on the district’s website must be fully completed and initially submitted to the administrator **at least 10 calendar days before the beginning date of the workshop/course.** If this requirement is not met, the administrator may deny the request due to the teacher’s non-compliance for the time requirement. For most approvals, the request needs approval from three administrators. Throughout the approval process, the teacher needs to regularly monitor MLP, for more information from any one of the administrators. If the teacher does not receive approval from all the pending approvers before the workshop begins, s/he should not attend the workshop since s/he does NOT have approval to participate in the session.

**Within 5 days of the completion of the workshop/course,** the teacher must enter a copy of the **Certificate of Completion** from the issuing organization into My Learning Plan and press the ***Mark Complete*** button. This action will initiate the final approval process for the workshop/course. In the My Learning Plan System, all completed ARA (Workshop/Course) forms must be marked complete by June 30th of the application and completion year or the teacher/therapist’s stipend will be delayed for one year. If there is a special extenuating circumstance, the Curriculum Office may override this rare situation. The decision rests in this office with no appeal rights.

The **ARA (Curriculum Work)** form found in the Frontline My Learning Plan System on the district’s website must be fully completed and initially submitted to the administrator **at least 10 calendar days before the beginning date of the curriculum work.** The curriculum work may not begin until all the pending approvers have approved the project and the building or district administrator has assigned the location for the work.

All proposals of new ARA (Curriculum Work) must be submitted by May 31st documented in the MLP System for that particular year allowing the participants enough time to complete a quality project by June 30th. Under emergency or unusual circumstances, the Curriculum Office may override this submission date. The decision rests in this office with no appeal rights.

**ARA Work Beyond 15 Hours:**

The MTA contract states the following regarding ARA work that exceeds the 15 hour limit:  *A teacher may qualify for no more than one (1) such award for any one (1) school year. Approved clock hours above the minimum of fifteen (15) minimum will be paid at $67./hour.*

The Curriculum Office will consider applying this new contractual language as an extension of an ARA for a teacher or group of teachers who may need a few more hours to complete a current project. The teacher(s) needs to provide a written rationale stating the number of needed hours and a solid rationale for the request. The Curriculum Office also reserves the right to ask a teacher to complete an additional ARA based on district priorities in the same year and if the teacher accepts additional ARA funds will be awarded to the teacher. At no time, shall a teacher/therapist submit a request for a second ARA in the same school year, since this would be a violation of the contractual language.