

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FOCUS-“IMPROVE MAP SCORES” PHILOSOPHY

The Winona R-III School District believes in professional growth for all teachers regardless of experience. We recognize attainment of a college degree as a beginning for professional growth that will continue throughout the teaching career. Professional development represents an attitude among our staff members of wanting to become better at what we do.

We believe goals for professional growth include:

- Providing professional development opportunities that are consistent to the district CSIP plan and state requirements for high quality professional development;
- Reading, studying, and discussing research on instructional practices and quality professional development;
- Identifying and striving to correct weaknesses within the area of instruction and/or curriculum;
- Improving personal communication skills;
- Staying informed on current mental hygiene and personal growth topics that may keep individuals healthier and happier;
- Sharing and cooperating with all staff members to ensure an effective learning environment for students;
- Providing a mentoring program for beginning teachers and faculty new to the district;
- Becoming knowledgeable about the components of our school system, and sharing in the decision-making process with administrations through established committees.

High quality professional development must:

- Activity engage teachers, over time;
- Be directly linked to improve student learning so that all children may score proficient;
- Be directly linked to district and building school improvement plans;
- Provide time and other resources for learning, practicing, and follow-up;
- Be supported by district and building leadership;
- Provide teachers with the opportunity to give the district feedback on the effectiveness of participation in this professional development activity.

Our hope is that by keeping ourselves “up-to-date” on current trends and theories in education, we will be better able to educate the children. We believe the responsibility

for professional growth should be shared between the individual and the school district. Attainable goals will be set on the personal level as well as the district level.

We are committed to helping and guiding each other as we all grow professionally. Realizing that first- and second-year teachers may need more help than experienced teachers, we will extend to them our knowledge and guidance to enable them to achieve a higher level of competence in a shorter period of time.

Based on each year's student performance (APR), the district will provide release time for workshops, in-service, and peer observations. Funds will be available for previously mentioned items plus any other coursework that strengthens the teacher's knowledge in areas of weakness.

By having the most competent, caring faculty possible, we will be able to offer students in the district the excellence in education they deserve.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMITMENT

The Winona R-III School Board values professional development for its faculty and is committed to providing systematic, professional development for both beginning and practicing teachers. The board will support the Professional Development Committee, provide a professional development plan for beginning teachers, and provide in-service opportunities for all practicing teachers. Adequate time and funds will be included in the district's yearly calendar and budget to support the programs.

The Winona R-III School Board shall provide a Professional Development Program to be in compliance with State Statutes regarding assistance for beginning teachers. A committee will be elected by the teachers to develop a plan to carry out the goals of the Professional Development Program. The Professional Development Program shall further be in compliance with the "Outstanding Schools Act" Section 7 of Senate Bill #380 of the 87th General Assembly.

See: Board Policies #4410, #4411, and #4412

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Professional Development Committee shall consist of two ex-officio members from administration and eight to ten members with representation from each building. Member shall be certified staff members with at least five years teaching experience. Upon vacancy, members shall be elected by certified staff using ballots.

2. The committee will elect a Chairperson and a Secretary.
 - The Chairperson will call meetings, create agendas, and conduct meetings. The Chairperson will share the PDC plan with the school board as changes occur.
 - The Secretary will keep minutes of the meetings.
3. The PDC meeting will be held monthly or as needed. The dates will be determined by the Chairperson and each member will be notified.
4. All members will be responsible for communication of PDC information to administration and staff members, including:
 - Collaborating plans with the building administrator;
 - Posting professional development opportunities;
 - PDC awareness at staff meetings;
 - Evaluation. (Needs Assessment Survey)
5. All members will assist with the Mentor Program. (PD Plans)
6. The entire PDC committee will plan professional development opportunities for the certified staff to help accomplish PDC goals.
7. The PDC committee will take requests for approval of expenditures and will maintain a record of funds available for the district.
8. All members will make sure staff development monies support the PDC goals and CSIP goals of the district and meet the criteria of “High Quality” standards.
9. The PDC committee will approve the applications regarding professional development activities for reimbursement turned in by individual staff members.
10. The PDC committee will act as a part of the Sick Leave Pool Committee.

NEW TEACHER ASSISTANCE

Missouri Law requires that school districts provide a “professional development plan” for each faculty member who has less than one year of teaching experience. To ensure that each beginning teacher has a plan, the Professional Development Committee should work cooperatively with all staff members.

In the beginning, the plan will address the teacher’s first year in the classroom. The plan will be amended periodically, with new goals added as others are mastered. The plan will remain during the time the teacher holds a CCPC certification.

It must be emphasized, however, that the purpose of the professional development plan is to assist, not evaluate, the beginning teacher. The plan must respond to individual needs. The goals identified in the plan should relate, in part, to the evaluation criteria suggested in *Guidelines for Performance Based Teacher Evaluation in Missouri*.

The beginning teacher's mentor should initiate preparation of the professional development plan. Planning between the mentor and beginning teacher should occur prior to or during the first month of the school year and should be on file by October 1. The plan should include goals that deal with areas such as discipline, understanding of district policies, and use of curriculum guides, equipment, and materials.

As soon as appropriate, or at least by the beginning of the second semester, the beginning teacher should elaborate upon the original professional development plan, tailoring the goals to his or her needs. The new teacher's mentor, supervisor (typically the building principal or literacy coach), and higher education representative may wish to form a professional development team to help the teacher with the process.

Copies of the initial plan all subsequent revisions should be filed with the PDC Chairperson where it will be readily available for review and updating. Convenient access to the plan is important since progress often depends on frequent review and mid-course adjustments. Forms will be included in the Appendix, which teachers may use to record in-service training hours to be applied toward certification upgrade, and to record mentor and beginning teacher contracts.

MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAM

The "Missouri Professional Teacher and Administration Act," sections 168.400 to 168.415 of Missouri Law, requires that each school district develop a beginning teacher assistance program. This law requires the designation of an experienced faculty member to act as mentor teacher, provide assistance, and be a part of that beginning teachers support system. In the Winona R-III District, the mentor teacher shall be a part of this support system during the first year of employment, with a second year optional. Mentor teachers may be reassigned.

Mentor Selection:

Any teacher who has at least five years of experience in a Missouri public school system and is willing to be trained will be eligible to volunteer to serve as a mentor. Ideally, a mentor should be teaching the same grade level and in the same area of certification as the beginning teacher. However, in cases where this is not possible, the mentor could be a faculty member with similar certification or grade level teaching experience as the beginning teacher. An administrator certified in the same grade level as the beginning teacher could also serve. If it is not possible to find a qualified person within the district to be a mentor for a specific beginning teacher, then one could be

utilized from a neighboring district. This should be a last resort, however, because of the distance and expense to the district.

It shall be the principal's responsibility to identify mentor teachers in sufficient time to allow for training before they begin assisting new teachers in preparing their initial professional development plans. The school district shall provide the training for all mentor teachers that will enable them to be the most beneficial to the beginning teachers. The district shall provide this training, and funds for this shall come from the Professional Development Fund.

Mentor Training:

At the beginning of each school year, time will be set aside for Mentor/New Teacher training. Training will include initiating preparation of the beginning teacher's professional development plan and, along with others, help the teacher to elaborate upon the original plan as soon as appropriate. Training will also give strategies on how to help the beginning teacher accomplish the goals identified in the professional development plan and acquire needed professional skills during the first year. The district shall provide opportunities to meet with and counsel the beginning teacher as needed.

The district will also provide release time (arranged with the literacy coach) for the mentor teacher to observe in the beginning teacher's classroom, and will provide release time to the beginning teacher to observe in the classrooms of master teachers. (Twice in the first semester) The teachers involved, in cooperation with the building principal, will determine the amount and frequency of these observations.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NEW TEACHER

- Fulfill certification requirements;
- Keep an open communication with mentor by seeking support and assistance when needed by asking questions;
- Maintain a professional file;
- Update and maintain professional development plan;
- Observe mentor as they teach.

**See Appendix for a list of DESE Certification Classifications

HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

Winona R-III

According to the law, beginning teacher assistance programs “shall include assistance from the teacher education program which provided the teacher’s training if such training was provided in a Missouri college or university”.

The Winona R-III School administration and the higher education institution involved should decide the type of assistance and how it is provided cooperatively. The superintendent, or his designee, should request assistance by notifying the appropriate college or universities when graduates of their institutions are hired.

Higher education institutions may assist beginning teachers by making on-site visits, establishing a telephone support network, and by providing seminars, a summer institute, and as many opportunities as possible for group interaction. Academic specialists should be on call to provide subject matter assistance for new teachers.

ASSISTING PRACTICING TEACHERS

The law requires a district’s Professional Development Committee to assess the in-service needs of practicing teachers. The assessment instrument should be based on the district’s School Improvement Plan.

Meeting the Needs: Once identified, faculty concerns and needs will be categorized by building, grade level, or subject area. The PDC will set priorities and prepare a plan for addressing the identified needs and improving classroom instruction in the district.

Evaluation: Participants will be asked to rate each activity and suggest ways to improve future efforts.

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

In the planning and development of district professional growth activities for teachers, the PDC establishes the following goals and objectives based on the district’s CSIP plan:

Program Objectives:

1. Offer high quality professional development opportunities through district workshops that address development needs and instructional strategies which foster growth and effectively increase student achievement.
2. Support new staff through the mentor program for beginning teachers.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: GOAL ONE

To address professional development issues for Objectives 1 and 2 of the Winona R-III School District's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan.

CSIP Objective 1: One hundred percent of our students will meet or exceed the performance standards for local, state, and national measures of achievement.

PD Strategy #1: PDC funds will be used to provide MAP team training. The Literacy Coach will facilitate study groups designed to analyze MAP data and determine strengths and weaknesses in academic areas. Members of the study group will be instructed in the use of selected response questions, open and closed constructed response questions, and performance events for the regular curriculum. Meetings will be held outside school hours and PD funds will be used for stipends and expenses.

PD Strategy #2: Provide high quality development opportunities for faculty that focuses on increasing student performance in target areas.

PD Strategy #3: PDC will encourage teachers to participate in Peer Coaching and Teacher Collaboration as a means of professional growth in MAP areas that show a need for improvement. These activities will be facilitated by common planning times and release time for observation of another teacher. PD funds will be used to pay for substitute teachers, if needed, so that teachers may participate in the activities.

PD Strategy #4: Teachers may take a district required college class or participate in workshops, to learn new teaching strategies and ways to improve student performance.

PD Strategy #5: In-services will be presented to all teachers regarding test-taking skills for students.

CSIP Objective 2: Annually, at least seventy-five percent of the professional development budget will fund activities based on student performance needs.

PD Strategy #1: PDC will use ASVAB, ACT, MAP, STAR, McGraw-Hill Benchmarks, and Pearson Shaywitz Dyslexia Screening data to determine student performance weaknesses. Professional development activities which improve these weaknesses will be given priority.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: GOAL TWO

To assist teachers with continuing education in the academic fields.

PD Strategy #1: PD funds will be used to reimburse/partially reimburse teachers for college tuition for classes in areas that lead toward certification or additional certification in areas of critical need as requested by the Winona R-III School Board.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: GOAL THREE

To assist beginning teachers.

PD Strategy #1: PD funds will be used to pay expenses, including a substitute teacher, for attendance at a beginning teacher workshop for each beginning teacher.