

# Professional Development Framework (What Counts?)

## Revised - July 2001

In order to meet the Required Professional Development for Teachers Regulations (*N.J.A.C. 6:11-13.1-6.11-13.6*), all professional development opportunities must be delineated in an educator's Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) and must be consistent with the preamble and standards developed by the New Jersey Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB) and approved by the Commissioner of Education. Only professional development activities that conform to the professional development standards and the PTSB mission, and that are clearly outlined in the educator's PIP, will be credited toward required hours of professional development.

It is the intention of the Commissioner and the PTSB to provide flexibility and guidance to ensure credibility for meaningful professional development through a variety of ongoing and supported district activities. Therefore, the genesis for planning should be a balance of the varieties of professional development opportunities that produce a valuable experience for the participant and culminate in enhanced student learning. Therefore, the PTSB encourages educators to avail themselves of professional development opportunities, which encompass as many categories of professional development as possible within each five-year cycle.

The PTSB strongly recommends that educators design their personal professional development to include district inservice and activities related to their professional development goals with a focus on content knowledge and methods of enriching and broadening pedagogy. The PTSB also recommends that individuals create a plan that:

- \* is unique to their specific needs;
- \* considers school and district goals; and
- \* is balanced over time among a variety of professional development experiences.

There are two interdependent methods for accomplishing the requirements for professional development. These include the approved district professional development plan and an individual's professional improvement plan (PIP).

This framework shall be applied and interpreted in the context of the definitions of terms appended to this document.

The PTSB has currently identified the following general categories of professional development:

1. Formal courses, offered on or off line, and conferences (including, but not limited to, workshops, seminars, institutes, and/or such programs) sponsored by colleges and universities, district boards of education, professional associations, training organizations or other entities approved through the local district plan process or as part of the provider registration system. Such activities shall accrue hour-for-hour for professional development credit.
2. Courses, seminars, or other activities which are required for maintenance of licenses or certificates issued by professional organizations or government entities (for example, social

workers, nurse). Such activities shall accrue hour-for-hour for professional development credit. In instances where the same course must be taken twice within the five-year period, please note that the hours will count only once toward fulfilling the continuing education requirement.

3. The process of developing curriculum focused on the Core Curriculum Content Standards, including, but not limited to, research, writing, and revision. Such activities shall accrue hour-for-hour for professional development credit.
4. Activities that support and/or enhance the profession including, but not limited to, grant writing, mentoring a preservice teacher or a novice teacher, professional service on boards or committees, and teaching a course or workshop. Please note that the total number of hours that can be accrued for these activities is 75 out of the 100 required hours.

The following provides the number of hours that can be accrued in various activities that serve the profession:

- a. The total number of hours for service on boards/committees will not exceed ten (10) hours per year of professional development credit, provided that such service is identified in the PIP with the specific goals of the experience outlined therein.
  - b. A mentor or cooperating teacher will accrue one hour of professional development credit for each week of supervision. An educator who works with a preservice teacher or a team of preservice teachers in a junior practicum will earn three professional development hours per semester.
  - c. In addition to the actual clock hours spent in delivery of the first presentation, presenters or teachers of courses or workshops will accrue professional development hours on the basis of two hours of preparation time for every hour of delivery time. The teaching or presenting of the same or a similar course or workshop will count only once in a five-year cycle.
5. Independent professional studies including, but not limited to, action research, study groups, sabbaticals, fellowships, internships, teacher exchanges, textbook review, portfolio development, online workshops or programs, and contributions to professional literature. If an individual decides to develop such an independent study, he/she must adhere to the following procedures:
    - a. The individual's PIP must include a written rationale demonstrating how his/her proposed plan is consistent with the state standards for professional development.
    - b. The individual and his/her immediate supervisor must discuss the projected number of hours which will be spent in such study.
    - c. Over the course of the independent study, the staff member will maintain a log of actual hours completed.

## RELATED IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

### Teachers on Leave

A teacher on leave for one year or less has the option to accrue professional development hours if: (a) the teacher has a PIP for the school year; (b) the teacher and the supervisor have signed off on the PIP; and (c) the teacher has delineated the potential professional development opportunities.

### Part-Time Teachers

A part-time teacher is required to accrue 50 hours of professional development within each five-year cycle. A part-time teacher is defined as one who is employed on a regular basis for the school year, but for less than the full school day or week.

The following formula will be used to handle cases where teachers move back and forth between full- and part-time employment within these five years.

The formula is the calculation of part-time work added to full-time work:  $x/5 \times \# \text{ hours required in five years} = \text{total number of hours required of that teacher}$ . For example, the number of hours a teacher who is part time for three years and full time for two years would be calculated as follows:  $(3/5 \times 50 = 30) + (2/5 \times 100 = 40) = 70$  total hours required.

### Full-Time Teachers Released for Local Education Association Responsibilities

Full-time teachers serving as full-time local education association presidents should be considered "teachers on leave" and should follow the procedures for these teachers.

### Validation of Professional Development

Validation of completion of professional development can be a transcript from a college or university, the certificate issued by a registered provider, or an attendance record signed by the chairperson or facilitator of a committee. This information will be recorded and documented on the Record of Professional Development Hours.

### Provisionally Certified Teachers

All active teaching staff members holding standard instructional or educational services licenses are required to fulfill this requirement. The regulations do not apply to provisionally certified teachers (*As stated in Commissioner of Education's letter - Sept. 5, 2000*).

## Appendix: Definitions of Terms

- **Action research** - Educators work collaboratively to form questions about their professional practice; to collect, analyze, and interpret data; to draw conclusions about their practice; and to use the results of this research to enhance and improve their professional practice.
- **College credit hour** - One hour of college credit is equal to 15 hours of professional development credit.
- **Committee work** - Service on a school, district or county/state level work group in which educational improvement is the focus.
- **Cooperating teacher** - A cooperating teacher is an individual who supervises or guides a preservice teacher during his/her student teaching, internship, or practicum experiences.
- **Curriculum development** - Including but not limited to research, writing, and revision.
- **Independent study** - An independent professional development project related to an individual's job and the Core Curriculum Content Standards developed by an educator with approval by his/her supervisor.
- **Mentor** - A mentor is an individual who works with a teaching staff member during the induction process.
- **Preservice teacher** - A student in an approved teacher education program.
- **Study groups** - Group members design and implement a program to study a particular issue and its impact on their class, school district, or on education in general.