

**NORTH COLONIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS  
LATHAM, NEW YORK**

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

This document is submitted in response to Commissioner's Regulations, Section 100.2 (dd), Professional Development Plan (PDP). Our district and teachers' bargaining union (N.C.T.A.) has an existing contract agreement extending July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2009, indicating we are engaged in significant professional development activities. Further, members of our Staff Development Committee concur that we are currently meeting the spirit and detail of the Regulations. A summary of our practices includes the following components.

**A. Needs Analysis, Goals and Objectives**

Each year the District Staff Development Steering Committee completes a needs analysis regarding in-service needs, professional development workshops, superintendent's day workshops, grade level meetings, department meetings, in-service courses and any other professional training work required to implement curriculum and to improve teaching and learning.

The process includes recommendations from all of the districts' steering committees. These are the districts' subject area groups that develop curriculum and, to some extent, follow-up with in-service recommendations. Our steering committees include English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, Wellness, Career and Technical Education and Staff Development. The committees are comprised of teachers, administrators and parents. In addition, Staff Development objectives are developed through recommendations from departments, buildings and levels (e.g., elementary or secondary) surveys as well as through District Objectives. Members of the Staff Development Steering Committee meet in the spring and summer to finalize annual recommendations.

Illustrations of the process are included for review:

Attachment A - Staff Development Committee Objectives

Attachment B - Overall District Objectives

It also should be noted that prior to developing recommendations all district steering committees consider New York State Standards that pertain to specific areas of study. Department, grade level, faculty and district agendas include regular reference to the Standards.

The process for implementing Staff Development Objectives includes a specific process of evaluation. This is evident in the last column of our objectives page.

**B. Teachers' Expected Participation in Professional Development**

Currently we provide four (4) Superintendent's in-service workshop days which engage all teachers in staff development for seven (7) hours x four (4) or 28 hours annually. This totals 140 hours over a five-year period. In addition, one half-day per year is devoted to each elementary teacher at grade level meetings. After-school department meetings and building faculty meetings occur at least monthly. These are all mandatory in-service

opportunities. There is a voluntary staff development course program for which participating teachers receive credit toward salary incentives. Some out of district courses are also eligible for this program.

For new teachers receiving initial certification after February 2, 2004, our district in-service training already meets the 175-hour mandate (for the first five years.) In addition, our special courses and program offerings go well beyond 175 hours. For example, continued reading and writing staff development, differentiated instruction training, technology workshops, grade level meetings, ELA/Math and other New York State assessment scoring, Building Council training, mentor training, each include many hours of training. Also, new teachers experience an extra 21 hours at the end of August and second year teachers, 10 hours of in-service per the district in-service held annually at the end of August. Furthermore, at the elementary level, all teachers K-2 and 3-6 participate in a reading in-service and orientation.

Furthermore, the negotiated contract between the North Colonie Teachers' Association and the district, while providing to new teachers the required 175 hours of professional development every five years, recognizes that all teachers have a professional obligation to participate in professional development in order to remain current with their profession and meet the needs of students. Subsequently, the regulations that are required of new teachers, serve as a guideline for all teachers. This is stated in Article IV, Section F, part 2 of the 2007-2009 negotiated agreement. (See Attachment C)

C. **Alignment of Professional Development with the New York State Standards and Assessments, Student Needs and Teacher Capacities**

In terms of "Articulation of Professional Development" across grade levels, this too is coordinated by principals and steering committees. For elementary grades, a council of seven elementary principals meets bi-monthly to address curriculum, evaluation, instruction and professional development issues. Recommendations from this group that impact K-6 are implemented in conjunction with teachers and the assistant superintendent. Progress is reported to the Staff Development Committee. Issues extending into 7 - 12 are coordinated, either through the Staff Development Committee or the Administrative Council. As new State Standards and Assessment issues are examined, multi-disciplinary planning sessions occur. Also, these staff development opportunities are carefully reviewed by individual steering committees prior to review by Staff Development Committee members. The process described in Section A of this document, "Needs Analysis, Goals and Objectives" also serves to illustrate the means by which alignment occurs.

D. **Monitoring and Sustaining the Professional Development Process**

Our process is cyclical. The committee meets consistently to monitor progress and the quality of in-service courses, the consistency of grade level and workshop topics, staff evaluation responses to course work and workshops, necessary materials, efficiency of instructors, etc.

E. **Assessing the Impact of Professional Development on Student Achievement and Teacher Practices**

The ultimate measurement and assessment of the impact of staff development is found in the assessment of the achievement of our students' results. In addition to the Staff Development Committee's evaluation of objectives, each department, building, subject area committee and administrator forwards an annual written report to the Superintendent of Schools. The superintendent takes this information and develops a District Annual Evaluation Document. This is a comprehensive report that includes empirical and anecdotal data on all levels, all subjects, and departments. All state, nationally normed, major district performance assessments and other unit criteria reference assessments are part of the raw data for this report. Staff development components are also addressed. Members of the Board of Education meet every December to review the report in its entirety.

Finally, as part of the negotiated agreement, the North Colonie Teachers' Association and the district jointly developed and agreed to a teacher evaluation form. Per the agreement, both the North Colonie Teachers' Association and the District agree that the purpose of evaluation is to improve instruction. The document enables an administrator to simultaneously acknowledge the efforts, contributions and successes of each teacher while making suggestions and recommendations for improvement. It also allows each teacher to engage in the vital practice of reflecting personally on areas of achievement and success while focusing on areas to improve instruction for the following school year. Thus, both teachers and administrators obtain consistent feedback on instructional practices that are used to monitor and adjust pedagogy. Samples of these are included as part of Attachment D.

F. **School Violence Training**

Throughout the school year, teachers complete a two-hour training as mandated through the New York State (SAVE) Safe Schools Legislation. This training is completed at both the district and building levels. Topics addressed include the warning signs that relate to violence and other troubling behaviors in children; the statutes, regulations and policies relating to a safe climate; effective classroom management techniques; the integration of social problem skill development for students; intervention techniques; scenario training for emergency response; and school referral processes.

G. **Teacher Mentor Program**

Since 1990, the North Colonie Central School District and the North Colonie Teachers' Association have jointly established and maintained a mentor program to meet the needs of new teachers entering the profession. A mentoring program is a required addendum to the Commissioner's Regulations, Section 100.2 (dd part IV) as of February 2, 2004. The North Colonie mentoring program provides new teachers with the ability to work with a seasoned educator who will share skill and knowledge while orientating the new teacher to the ways and mores of the school building and the district. In addition, the program benefits the mentor teacher by recognizing his/her expertise and by providing a means for sharing it. Mentors and mentees are allotted a total of two half days to work on curriculum, classroom observations, or other approved professional activities. They have the option of taking both half days in the first year or one half day the first year and one

half day the second year. Offering the option to take one half day the second year provides an opportunity for mentor and mentee to engage in more in-depth reflection after having gone through the rigors of the first year of teaching. Please refer to the document "Teacher Mentor Program for the North Colonie Central School District" for specifics on the program. (Attachment E)

JC/msc  
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Attachments: A. Staff Development Objectives 2009-2010  
B. District Committee Objectives  
C. Professional Development - Requirements  
D. Teacher Evaluation Form – (Two samples are included – one from General Education and a Pupil Services Department sample for a reading teacher  
E. Teacher Mentor Program