

The board believes a strong relationship exists between the quality of education afforded students and the competency of professional personnel employed by the school district. The board attaches a high priority to securing the most competent personnel available and, once they are employed, in assisting them in their professional growth and development throughout their careers. The primary purpose of staff development, both for individuals and groups of employees, is to improve the instructional program for all students by assisting teachers and other licensed personnel in improving and gaining even greater competence in their profession.

A. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The superintendent will provide ongoing staff development opportunities for licensed and support staff and shall require participation by such personnel as appropriate. Input from employees will be sought in developing district-wide programs. Local school staff development programs will be planned jointly by the principal and staff members.

Professional and staff development shall include all topics required by law or board policy, including but not limited to (1) the effective delivery of the required curriculum as required by G.S. 115C-81.45(d), -81.20(f), and -81.57(c); (2) a program of technology-related professional development as required by policy 3220, Technology in the Educational Program; and (3) a mental health training program, which includes all components required by G.S. 115C-375.20, G.S. 115C-376.5(d), and State Board of Education Policy SHLT-003 (see policies 4240/7312, Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety, and 6120, Student Health Services), the incorporation of technology in the student learning process, and on subjects clearly matched to the goals and objectives of the local safe school plans.

B. SELF-IMPROVEMENT

All employees are expected to engage in self-directed activities to improve their professional skills. These employees are encouraged to seek information and training through professional development programs as well as other opportunities in order to meet this responsibility.

C. PLANS FOR GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT

Supervisors and principals require licensed mandatory improvement plans established by state law and individual, monitored and/or directed growth plans established by the State Board of Education, for professional growth and improving performance. (See policy 7811, Plans for Growth and Improvement of Licensed Employees.) A performance improvement plan could involve participation in a professional development program or encompass a variety of strategies that are related to professional growth or improving performance.

D. PAYMENT OF COSTS

The district will consider paying reasonable costs, within budget limits, for any courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service training sessions or other sessions which an employee is required to attend by the local administration. The employee must seek prior approval for payments for out-of-district training.

The district will not bear the responsibility of the cost of training taken solely for the purposes of licensure renewal.

Legal Reference: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 106; G.S. 115C-81.20(f), -81.45(d), -81.75(c), -333, -333.1; -375.20, -376.5(d); State Board of Education Policies EVAL-004, SHLT-003.

Cross Reference: Technology in the Educational Program (policy 3220), Child Abuse and Related threats to Child Safety (policy 4240/7312), Student Health Services (policy 6120), Plans for Growth and Improvement of Licensed Employees (policy 7811)

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