

The board believes a strong relationship exists between the quality of education provided to students and the competency and training of all personnel employed by the school system. The board places a high priority on securing the most competent personnel available and, once they are employed, providing them with opportunities for professional growth and development throughout their careers. The goal of professional and staff development programs and opportunities for licensed professional employees and support staff is to improve the instructional program and create a safe learning environment for all students by improving and expanding the skills of the professional staff and support personnel.

**A. PROFESSIONAL AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

The superintendent shall provide ongoing development opportunities for licensed and support staff and shall require participation by such personnel as appropriate. The superintendent shall seek input from employees when developing system-wide programs. The principal shall seek input from school personnel when planning professional and staff development programs for his or her school.

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), ~~and~~ -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).

**B. SELF-IMPROVEMENT**

Licensed 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 also may require licensed employees to enter into plans, including 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 school system will consider paying reasonable costs, within budget limits, for any courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service training sessions, or other sessions an employee is required to attend by the local administration. The employee must seek prior approval for payments.

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

Legal References: 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), -81.57(c), -333, -333.1, -375.20, -376.5(d); State Board of Education Policies EVAL-004, SHLT-003

Cross References: 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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