

4.31—STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The District shall develop and implement a plan for the professional development of its certified employees. The district's plan shall, in part, align district resources to address the professional development activities identified in each school's ACSIP. Each certified employee shall receive a minimum of sixty (60) hours of professional development annually to be fulfilled between June 1 and May 31. Professional development hours earned in excess of sixty (60) in the designated year cannot be carried over to the next year. The goal of all professional development activities shall be improved student achievement and academic performance that results in individual, school-wide, and system-wide improvement designed to ensure that all students demonstrate proficiency on the state criterion-referenced assessments. The district's professional development plan shall demonstrate scientifically research-based best practice, and shall be based on student achievement data and in alignment with the ADE Rules Governing Professional Development and current Arkansas code.

Teachers and administrators shall be involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the plan for their own professional development. The results of the evaluation made by the participants in each program shall be used to continuously improve the district's professional development offerings and to revise the school improvement plan.

Flexible professional development hours (flex hours) are those hours which an employee is allowed to substitute professional development activities, different than those offered by the district, but which still meet criteria of either the employee's Individual Improvement Plan or the school's ACSIP, or both. The district shall determine on an annual basis how many, if any, flex hours of professional development it will allow to be substituted for district scheduled professional development offerings. The district administration and the building principal have the authority to require attendance at specific professional development activities. Employees must receive advance approval from the building principal for activities they wish to have qualify for flex professional development hours. To the fullest extent possible, professional development activities are to be scheduled and attended such that teachers do not miss their regular teaching assignments. Six (6) approved flex hours credited toward fulfilling the sixty (60) hour requirement shall equal one contract day. Hours of professional development earned by an employee in excess of sixty (60) or not pre-approved by the building principal shall not be credited toward fulfilling the required number of contract days for that employee. Hours earned that count toward the required sixty (60) also count toward the required number of contract days for that employee.

Teachers and administrators who, for any reason, miss part or all of any scheduled professional development activity they were required to attend, must make up the required hours in comparable activities which are to be pre-approved by the building principal.

To receive credit for his/her professional development activity each employee is responsible for obtaining and submitting documents of attendance for each professional development activity he/she attends. Documentation is to be submitted to the building principal or designee.

Teachers and administrators are required to obtain sixty (60) hours of approved professional development annually over a five-year period as part of licensure renewal requirements. At least six (6) of the sixty (60) annual hours shall be in the area of educational technology.

Teachers are required to receive at least two hours annually of their sixty (60) required hours of professional development designed to enhance their understanding of effective parental involvement strategies.

Teachers who provide instruction in Arkansas history shall receive at least two (2) hours of professional development in Arkansas history as part of the sixty (60) hours required annually.

Administrators are required to receive at least three hours annually of their sixty (60) required hours of professional development designed to enhance their understanding of effective parental involvement strategies and the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation. Each administrator's professional development is required to also include training in data disaggregation, instructional leadership and fiscal management.

Teachers required by the superintendent, building principal, or their designee to take approved training related to teaching an advance placement class for a subject covered by the College Board and Educational Testing Service, shall receive up to thirty (30) hours of credit toward the sixty (60) hours of professional development required annually.

Certified personnel may earn up to twelve (12) hours of professional development for time they are required to spend in their instructional classroom, office or media center prior to the first day of student/teacher interaction provided the time is spent in accordance with the state law and current ADE rules that deal with professional development.

Teachers are eligible to receive fifteen (15) professional development hours for a college course that meets the criteria identified in law and the applicable ADE rules. The board shall determine if the hours earned apply toward the required sixty (60). A maximum of thirty (30) hours may be applied toward the sixty (60) hours of professional development required annually.

Employees who do not receive or furnish documentation of the required annual professional development jeopardize the accreditation of their school and academic achievement of their students. Failure of an employee to receive sixty (60) hours of professional development in any given year shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Approved professional development activities may include conferences, workshops, institutes, individual learning, mentoring, peer coaching, study groups, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification, distance learning, internships, district/school programs, and approved college/university course work. Professional development activities should be consistent with the objectives developed by the National Staff Development Council Standards.

Professional development activities shall relate to the following areas: content (K-12); instructional strategies; assessment; advocacy/leadership; systemic change process; standards, frameworks, and curriculum alignment; supervision; mentoring/coaching; educational technology; principles of learning/developmental stages; cognitive research; and building a collaborative learning community.

Legal References: Arkansas State Board of Education: Standards of Accreditation 15.04
ADE Rules Governing Professional Development
A.C.A. § 6-15-404(f)(2)
A.C.A. § 6-17-703
A.C.A. § 6-17-704

A.C.A. § 6-17-705
A.C.A. § 6-15-1004(c)
A.C.A. § 6-15-1703
A.C.A. § 6-20-2303(14)

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