



Policy: Professional Development

Policy Number: GR

Policy Type: Personnel

Policy

Professional development includes a broad range of activities that provide opportunities for the growth in knowledge, skills and attributes that lead to improved practice.

Hanover School Division believes effective educators are life-long learners who participate in the on-going process of engaging in collegial and collaborative dialogue with other educators and education partners to expand the knowledge and expertise needed to provide a safe, supportive and effective environment that promotes learning.

Purpose

Hanover School Division promotes professional learning that:

- Builds collective efficacy
- Nurtures trusting, collegial relationships
- Creates opportunities for meaningful collaboration
- Incorporates data-centred cycles of inquiry
- Builds teacher's pedagogical expertise that leads to student, staff and system improvements

Scope

All professional staff.

Guidelines

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Professional Learning is most effective when it is personalized, differentiated, and job-embedded

2. Professional Learning is a continuous, collaborative inquiry:
 - designed to incrementally improve practice;
 - informed by student learning and achievement data;
 - grounded in current research;
 - guided by both the school's and the Division's multi-year, strategic plans.

3. Professional Learning is framed by continuous cycles of assessment, planning, and action that measures the impact of collective teaching practice on student learning and leads to greater collective efficacy.

Examples of professional development activities include:

- a) professional development meetings and professional development items in staff and team meetings
- b) attending conferences, courses, and professional development sessions
- c) coaching and mentoring
- d) participating in networks or projects providing opportunities for professional development
- e) lesson observations and debrief
- f) discussions with colleagues to reflect on effective practices, and
- g) research and investigation.

4. All teachers attending a professional development session will complete an evaluation form (XXXXX) after the session and submit it to their principal/vice principal.

5. School activities requiring staff participation will not be scheduled during Professional Development sessions. Appointments should not be scheduled on Professional Development days. In special circumstances, permission may be granted by the Principal after consultation with an Assistant Superintendent.

6. Part time teachers are expected to attend all Professional Development days. Part time teachers will be compensated for the additional time worked.

Senior Administration

Senior Administration may attend appropriate conferences and workshops to the extent provided by the budget.

Principals

Principals are responsible for the professional development of school-based professional staff. Divisional personnel together with school principals provide professional development for school support staff.

- Principals/Vice Principals are allocated \$600 annually which may be used to attend a larger conference.
- Principals may roll-over their annual allocation from year to year.
- Attendance at a larger conference must follow the same guidelines as the Extended Leave for Teachers for Professional Development.

EXTENDED LEAVE FOR TEACHERS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Out-of-Province, Extended Professional Development Opportunities
 - a) All out-of-province in-services and conferences will have to be recommended to the board for a final approval.
 - b) It is expected that, as far as possible, teachers will take full advantage of local and provincial professional development, on divisional or provincial professional development days and during special workshops sponsored by the division/school on regular school days. Each school is also provided with a professional development fund which is managed by the school principal and with permission can be accessed by teachers for one or two-day professional development sessions in the province.
 - c) Any out-of-province professional development opportunity must be approved by the Board. A teacher wishing to attend an out-of-province session should write a letter of request, signed by the teacher which outlines the number of days requested and the manner in which costs will be covered. The principal should countersign this letter to indicate to the Board that they are in agreement with the request and are supportive of the teacher's absence from the school. The superintendent will take such requests to the Board.

Considerations for approval:

- a) The professional development opportunity is directly related to the teacher's current or upcoming assignment.
- b) The professional development opportunity is sponsored by a recognized educational institution or association which is non-sectarian, non-partisan and not-for-profit.
- c) The maximum absence from school, including travel, will not exceed five teaching days.
- d) The teacher should generally have served three years on a permanent contract in the division.
- e) Teachers should generally limit such requests to once in a five year period.
- f) The number of anticipated school days a teacher has been released from the classroom in a given school year.
- g) The degree of interruption created for students/school by releasing the individual to attend the conference or professional development session.
- h) The number of individuals who will be in attendance at the same conference/professional development session.
- i) The frequency of attendance at similar conferences/professional development sessions.
- j) Future commitment or obligation by attendance at the professional development session.

NOTE: Teachers needing only one or two days to attend an out-of-province event, willing to use personal leave days, and requesting no additional divisional financial support, may be exempt from these limitations.

The board will consider each request for financial support on its own merits and may provide partial support on a cost sharing basis with the teacher and possibly the school:

- a) Teacher may choose to use personal leave days as part of the proposal
- b) School may provide support from the school professional development fund for substitute or registration costs
- c) Division may provide support for substitute costs, registration costs and travel expenses, up to a maximum of \$1000 per request.

2. Extended Volunteer / Service Opportunities

- a) What follows does not apply to **public service**, which is specifically dealt with in the Collective Agreement.
- b) It is expected that, as far as possible, teachers will use their breaks to participate in volunteer and service opportunities. It is also recognized that occasionally an opportunity will arise during the school year that may be very worthwhile for both the teacher and the community or may constitute a once in a career opportunity.
- c) Any volunteer opportunity beyond use of personal leave days must be approved by the Board. A teacher wishing to attend an out-of-province session should write a letter of request, signed by the teacher and outlining the number of days requested and the manner in which costs will be covered. The principal should countersign this letter to indicate to the Board that they are in agreement with the request and are supportive of the teacher's absence from the school. The superintendent will take such requests to the Board.

Consideration for approval:

- a) The volunteer opportunity is directly related to the teacher's current or upcoming assignment and will have significant application in the teacher's classroom.
- b) The volunteer opportunity is sponsored by a recognized institution or association which is non-sectarian, non-partisan and not-for-profit or where the project meets these criteria.
- c) The maximum absence from school, including travel, will not exceed 5 teaching days.
- d) The teacher should generally have served three years on a permanent contract in the division.*
- e) Teachers should generally limit such requests to once in a 5 year period.*

* Teachers needing only 1 or 2 days to attend a volunteer event, willing to use personal leave days, and requesting no additional divisional financial support, may be exempt from these limitations.

- f) The Board's potential support for volunteer opportunities would be limited to granting up to 3 unpaid days of leave.
- g) No more than two teachers from the division and not more than one teacher in any school would be granted leave for any one event, up to a limit of five teachers per academic year.

Date Policy Created:	August 22, 1995
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Reference(s):	
Related Forms:	