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pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Professional Development

*Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education Policy*

Subject: **Professional Development**
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POLICY STATEMENT

Each program must maintain well-trained staff by supporting their participation in quality professional development that is linked to program improvement, quality educational services, and increased student learning gains and outcomes.

PURPOSE

Program staff will engage in professional development activities to improve their effectiveness in completing their job duties. Program administrators will support job-embedded professional learning so that staff can implement new knowledge and measure its impact on program improvement and student outcomes.

GUIDANCE

The goal of job-embedded professional development is continuous program improvement to achieve quality programming and improved services to students. Effective job-embedded professional development involves ongoing commitment to supporting high-quality professional development activities, implementation of new knowledge in educational practice, and measuring the impact of such job-embedded professional development. Effective professional development is integrated into organizational goals and supported by the organizational structure.

Professional development includes formal and informal means of assisting staff in:

- Acquiring new knowledge, skills, and approaches;
- Exploring new or advanced understandings of content, theory, and resources; and
- Developing new insights into theory and its application to improve the effectiveness of their current practice and lead to professional growth.

The Division of Adult Education's Professional Development System (PDS) supports agencies by addressing professional development needs and goals through the delivery of consultation and direct services.

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PLANNING

- The program must budget time and resources for professional development.
- *The Program Improvement and Professional Development Worksheet* should be developed by the program professional development team with support from the PDS consultant. (Refer to Guidelines, Section 500 for required composition of program professional development team.)
- The *Program Improvement and Professional Development Worksheet* should include input from a cross-section of staff, including the program improvement team.
- The *Program Improvement and Professional Development Worksheet* should reflect the professional development activities of all staff.
- The program administrator and the in-house professional development specialist should work with staff to develop plans that include professional development activities that align with the program's overall plan.
- All plans must be reviewed, revised, and evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the program year and at the end of the year to inform the next year's planning.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Administrators and in-house professional development specialists should work together and with staff to ensure that knowledge and skills gained from professional development is implemented, follow-up work is completed, and the results are documented.
- Staff new to the field must complete appropriate division-required professional development, which includes induction into the field of adult and family literacy and completion of the required job-specific introductory course within their first year of employment. Programs should budget the cost for this time when planning to hire new staff.
- Programs must also have their own program-specific on-boarding process for staff. Staff must participate in professional development that is related to their adult education job duties and contributes to program improvement efforts. Staff must be provided with paid time to participate in professional development activities.
- Each program must have an in-house professional development specialist who is a proven, effective teacher. This person must have time dedicated in his or her schedule to meet the duties of the position.
- Each program must provide time and space for teachers to work in professional learning communities (PLCs) and/or virtual communities of practice (CoPs) for ongoing work on standards implementation and instruction institute follow-up.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Programs must maintain records of staff professional development.
- Programs must create a *Program Improvement and Professional Development Worksheet*.
- Programs must email program improvement team meeting minutes to their advisor.
- Programs should assess the impact of professional development on the classroom activities and student outcomes.
- Staff should assess the quality of professional development services as well as their own learning.
- The *Program Improvement and Professional Development Worksheet* should be reviewed throughout the year and modified based on staff and program improvement team input.
- Staff must complete on-line evaluations of PDS activities to ensure recognition of completion.

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Note: In cases in which a staff member does not complete a professional development activity for which a professional development provider has incurred a cost, a program may be required to reimburse the provider for those costs. Such reimbursement will have to be paid with non-grant funds (i.e., programs cannot use funds from grants received from the Division of Adult Education to pay required reimbursement).