



Professional Development Policy

Pacific Coast Academy recognizes that effective professional growth must continue to occur throughout the careers of all teachers, administrators, paraprofessional educators, and other classified employees involved in the direct instruction of pupils in order that teachers remain informed of changes in pedagogy, subject matter, and pupil needs. In enacting this policy, it is the intent of the Pacific Coast Academy to encourage teachers to engage in an individual program of professional growth that extends their content knowledge and teaching skills and for the school to establish professional growth programs that give individual teachers a wide range of options to pursue as well as significant roles in determining the course of their professional growth. It is also recognized that classified school employees need to update their skills and to learn best practices.

An individual program of professional growth may consist of activities that are aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession that contribute to competence, performance, or effectiveness in the profession of education and the classroom assignments of the teacher. Acceptable activities may include, among other acceptable activities, the completion of courses offered by regionally accredited colleges and universities, including instructor-led interactive courses delivered through online technologies; participation in professional conferences, workshops, teacher center programs, staff development programs, or a California Reading Professional Development Institute program; service as a mentor teacher; participation in school curriculum development projects; participation in systematic programs of observation and analysis of teaching; service in a leadership role in a professional organization; and participation in educational research or innovation efforts.

An individual program of professional growth may include a basic course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, which includes training in the subdiaphragmatic abdominal thrust (also known as the “Heimlich maneuver”) and meets or exceeds the standards established by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross for courses in that subject or minimum standards for training programs established by the Emergency Medical Services Authority. An individual program of professional growth may also include a course in first aid that meets or exceeds the standards established by the American Red Cross for courses in that subject or minimum standards for training programs established by the Emergency Medical Services Authority.

In evaluating professional learning for teachers, administrators, paraprofessional educators, or other classified employees involved in the direct instruction of pupils, the School shall evaluate

professional learning based on all of the following criteria, and may choose professional learning that meets any of the following criteria:

- (A) Helps attract, grow, and retain effective educators.
- (B) Is a part of every educator's experience in order to accelerate instructional improvement and support pupil learning.
- (C) Is based on needs assessment of educators and tied to supporting pupil learning.
- (D) Emphasizes the importance of meeting the needs of all pupils.
- (E) Is grounded in a description of effective practice, as articulated in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.
- (F) Affords educators opportunities to engage with others to develop their craft, including, but not limited to, opportunities to increase their content knowledge.
- (G) Ensures educators have adequate time to learn about, practice, reflect, adjust, critique, and share what educators need to ensure that all pupils, especially high-needs pupils, develop knowledge and lifelong learning skills that will help the pupils to be successful.
- (H) Recognizes and utilizes expert teaching and leadership skills.
- (I) Attends to collective growth needs as well as educators' individual growth needs.
- (J) Contributes to a positive, collaborative, and supportive adult learning environment.
- (K) Contributes to cycles of inquiry and improvement.
- (L) Is not limited to a single instance but supports educators through multiple iterations or engagements.
- (M) Is based on a coherent and focused plan.

Professional learning activities may also include collaboration time for teachers to develop new instructional lessons, to select or develop common formative assessments, to analyze pupil data, for mentoring projects for new teachers, or for extra support for teachers to improve practice. Appropriate professional learning may be part of a coherent plan that combines school activities within the school, including, but not limited to, lesson study or coteaching, and external learning opportunities that meet all of the following criteria:

- (A) Are related to the academic subjects taught.
 - (B) Provide time to meet and work with other teachers.
 - (C) Support instruction and pupil learning to improve instruction in a manner that is consistent with academic content standards.
- (e) For purposes of this section, "local educational agency" means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

Professional development training for classified school employees to update their skills and to learn best practices may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(1) Pupil learning and achievement, including all of the following:

(A) Training for paraprofessionals to assist teachers and administrators to improve the academic achievement of pupils.

(B) Training to ensure the curriculum frameworks and instructional materials are aligned to the common core standards.

(C) Training in the management and use of state and local pupil data to improve pupil learning.

(D) Training on the best practices in the appropriate interventions and assistance for at-promise pupils.

(2) Pupil and campus safety, including training and staff development in the latest and best practices for pupil safety and campus safety.

(3) Education technology, including management strategies and best practices regarding the use of education technology to improve pupil performance.

(4) School facility maintenance and operations, including new research and best practices in the operation and maintenance of school facilities, such as green technology and energy efficiency, that help reduce the use and the cost of energy at school sites.

(5) Special education, including training and staff development on the best practices to meet the needs of special education pupils, and to comply with any new state and federal mandates.

(6) School transportation and bus safety, including training and staff development on the best practices and standards for pupil transportation.

(7) Parent involvement, including training and staff development to enhance the ability of a school to increase parent involvement at school sites.

(8) Food service, including training and staff development on new research and findings for food preparation to provide nutritional meals and food management.

(9) Health, counseling, and nursing services, including training and staff development on the latest and best practices for pupil health care and counseling needs.

(10) Environmental safety, including training and staff development on pesticides and other possibly toxic substances so that they may be safely used at school sites.

Certificated and classified staff may also, in the discretion of the Executive Director and in line with the board approved budget, attend conferences, workshops, group trainings, etc., that align with the professional development goals identified herein.

Both certificated and classified staff are encouraged to participate in professional growth on an annual basis. Professional growth expenses may be reimbursed by the School with the Executive Director's approval. Some additional considerations for eligibility of reimbursement will be:

- Topic
- Relevancy to role in organization
- Application in a non-classroom based setting
- Cost

All professional growth opportunities are limited by annual budget considerations and may be denied on that basis alone.