

**CONTACT PERSONS**

**NAME:** Ava Belitzky  
Jane Granger

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**PHONE:** 850/922-9750

**SUNCOM:** 292-9750

**M E M O R A N D U M**

**DPE#:** 01-05

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** David C. Ashburn

**SUBJECT: District Professional Development Systems**

This memorandum provides an update on 2000 Legislation pertaining to district professional development systems. The 1999 budget proviso language for Specific Appropriation 117B required districts to submit their professional development systems to the Department for approval in order to receive state funding for teacher training. Included in this mandate was the requirement that principals establish professional development plans for all instructional personnel.

Professional development system requirements including master inservice plan requirements are now incorporated into Section 231.600, F.S. New language has been added, language has been transferred from Section 236.0811, F.S., (now repealed), and some transferred from budget appropriations proviso language. The attached law shows language new to Section 231.600, F.S., (underlined) with notations indicating the origins of certain portions. The significant language pertaining to professional development systems and inservice activities is shown below:

Each school district shall develop a professional development system.....

The professional development system must:

Be approved by the Department of Education. All substantial revisions to the system must be submitted to the department for review for continued approval;

Require the use of student achievement data, school discipline data, school environment surveys, assessments of parental satisfaction, performance appraisal data of teachers, managers and administrative personnel, and other performance indicators to identify school and student needs that can be met by improved professional performance.

Provide in-service activities coupled with follow-up support that are appropriate to accomplish district-level and school-level improvement goals and standards. The in-service activities for instructional personnel must primarily focus on subject content and teaching methods, including technology, as related to the Sunshine State Standards; assessment and data analysis; classroom management; and school safety.

Include a master plan for in-service activities, under rules of the State Board of Education, for all district employees from all fund sources. The master plan must be updated annually by September 1 using criteria for continued approval as specified by rules of the State Board of Education. Written verification that the in-service plan meets all requirements of this section must be submitted annually to the commissioner by October 1;

Require each school principal to establish and maintain an individual professional development plan for each instructional employee assigned to the school. The individual professional development plan must:

- a. Be related to specific performance data for the students to whom the teacher is assigned;
- b. Define the in-service objectives and specific measurable improvements expected in student performance as a result of the in-service activity;
- c. Include an evaluation component that determines the effectiveness of the professional development plan;

Include in-service activities for school administrative personnel that address updated skills necessary for effective school management and instructional leadership;

Provide for the continuous evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of professional development programs in order to eliminate ineffective programs and strategies and to expand effective ones. Evaluations must consider the impact of such activities on the performance of participating educators and their students' achievement and behavior.

Each district school board shall make available in-service activities to instructional personnel of nonpublic schools in the district and the state certified teachers who are not employed by the district school board on a fee basis not to exceed the cost of the activity per all participants.

The **Evaluation of the Florida Professional Development System Report** (enclosed) indicated that 73% of districts implemented the new requirements for professional development systems in 1999-2000; however, limited time frames impeded the quality of the programs. A higher level of implementation should occur this year with improved measures in place to ensure linkages between inservice activities and student and personnel needs. *Consequently, in order to integrate both recent legislative changes and increase the level of implementation, we request that all districts submit their 2000 Professional Development Systems to our office for state approval.* Though the Master Inservice Plan (MIP) is a part of the overall Professional Development System for the district's employees, submission of the Master Inservice Plan is not required. *However, to meet the statutory requirement, we request that districts enclose the required written MIP verification letter with the Professional Development System.*

Prior to submitting your system, we suggest that you use the attached **Review Questions for Professional Development Systems** as a guide to review your system and make adjustments as appropriate. The enclosed **2000 District Professional Development System Criteria** form should serve as the Table of Contents for your system. *Based on feedback from our 1999 Review Teams, the expediency of review is greatly facilitated by district use of this Table of Contents form with corresponding system page numbers listed.*

*Please submit three copies of your 2000 system and your MIP verification letter to our office by October 1, 2000.* Your district's first allocation of Training Funds will be disbursed automatically; subsequent allocations after October 30 will be made based on system review results. A team of district reviewers will be convened to review the systems and make recommendations for approval accordingly.

**Please submit 3 copies of your system by October 1, 2000, to:**  
**Jane Granger**  
**Florida Department of Education**  
**Bureau of Educator Recruitment and Professional Development**  
**325 West Gaines Street, Room 124**  
**Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400**

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Thank you for your cooperation as we work together to implement this legislation. If you have questions or need additional information , please contact Ava Belitzky or Jane Granger at the number listed above.

DA/dm

cc: District Staff Development Directors

Attachments:

Enrolled version of Section 231.600, F.S.  
Review Questions for Professional Development Systems  
2000 District Professional Development System Criteria  
The Evaluation of the Florida Professional Development Systems