

Instruction - District Staff Development Policy Bemidji Area Schools

Minnesota Statutes

Minnesota Statutes 122A.60 and 122A.61 require schools to set aside two percent of the district's basic revenue for the purposes of professional staff development. Fifty percent (50%) of the budget will be allocated to the sites on a per teacher basis. Twenty-five percent (25%) will be allocated for district-wide efforts subject to approval by the superintendent of schools or his/her designee, and twenty-five percent (25%) will be used for best practice grants to sites.

Staff Development Policy

A district staff development plan will be reviewed annually and approved by the local school.

Funding

Funding for staff development will follow state guidelines relative to MS 122A.60 and 122A.61, which require schools to set aside two percent of the district's basic revenue for the purposes of professional development. Fifty percent (50%) of the budget will be allocated to the sites on a per teacher basis. Twenty-five percent (25%) will be allocated for district-wide efforts subject to approval by the superintendent of schools or his/her designee, and twenty-five percent (25%) will be used for best practice grants to sites. Districts that are in statutory operating debt are exempt from setting aside two percent of basic revenue for staff development.

Option to Withhold Funds

Districts may annually waive the requirement to reserve any or all of the two percent set aside for staff development if the majority of the teachers and a majority of the school board vote to do so. If the teachers and the board agree to do so, the remainder of money set aside must follow the 50/25/25% formula outlined in statute.

Site Teams

Site teams must demonstrate how well they are meeting their staff development goals stated in their building plans. The board may determine the site is not achieving its staff development outcomes, at which time the board may withhold a portion of the staff development allocation for the following year or until the board determines the outcomes are being met.

Governing Body

A local staff development committee will oversee the staff development process. The committee will include a majority of teachers and represent a wide array of grades and subjects. The committee will include teachers, special educators, non-teaching staff, parents, and administrators. The district committee will have the responsibility to ensure

that the activities funded by staff development funds at the district and building level are consistent with district-wide goals.

Local School Board Education Goals

School board goals for staff development shall be determined through the school improvement process and other strategic planning activities sponsored by the school board.

Staff Development Goals for 2002-2003

District Theme: Understanding the Effects of Poverty on Student Learning

District Goals

District-sponsored projects must be related to one of four areas targeted by the District Staff Development Committee that are consistent with district goals:

- **School Improvement**
- **Graduation Standards**
- **Technology**
- **Innovative Projects**

Communicating with the Community

Education goals are communicated to local stakeholders annually in the Systems Accountability Report (SAR).

Mandated State Staff Development Legislative Goals

All district and building staff development activities must relate to at least one of six State Staff Development goals legislated by the Minnesota Legislature.

- **School Improvement & Graduation Standards:** Improve student achievement of state and local education standards in all areas of the curriculum by using best practice methods.
- **At-Risk Student Needs:** Effectively meet the needs of a diverse student population, including at-risk children, children with disabilities and gifted children, within the regular classroom and other settings.
- **Diversity:** Provide an inclusive curriculum for a racially, ethnically and culturally diverse student population that is consistent with the state education diversity rule and the district education diversity plan.
- Improve staff **collaboration** and develop mentoring and peer coaching programs for teachers new to the district.
- Effectively teach and model **violence prevention** policy and curriculum that address early intervention alternatives, issues of harassment and teach nonviolent alternatives for conflict resolution.
- Provide teachers and other members of **site-based management team** with appropriate management and financial management skills.

Site Staff Development Committees

Site staff development committees will be formed in each building. The committee must develop a building plan that is consistent with the school board goals for staff development. Site teams must spend staff development funds in a manner in keeping with the building plan. The site committee shall also have the responsibility to evaluate the staff development efforts at the site.

Site Plans

The building staff development committee (site team) is responsible to oversee building plans and expenditures. The building level staff development activities must be consistent with district-wide goals.

Evaluation

The district staff development committee and the building staff development committee will complete the annual staff development evaluation forms required by the Department of Children, Families, and Learning.

The local staff development committee will recommend methods, procedures, and resources for evaluating the effectiveness of staff development in the district and at each site. A common evaluation form will be offered for optional use for each activity. The building committee will have the ability to determine the extent to which the common evaluation form will be used. If not used, the building committee has the responsibility to determine other means for evaluating its activities.

Best Practices

The State of Minnesota requires that funds spent at the district level on innovative projects be used to promote Best Practice Methods. Best practice is defined as meeting one or several of the following criteria.

- Student-Centered:** The best starting point for schooling is young people's real interests; all across the curriculum, investigating students' own questions.
- Experiential:** Active, hands-on, concrete experience is the most powerful and neutral form of learning.
- Holistic:** Children learn best when they encounter whole ideas, events, and materials in purposeful contexts.
- Authentic:** Real, rich, complex ideas and materials are at the heart of the curriculum.
- Expressive:** To fully engage ideas, construct meaning, and remember information, students must regularly employ the whole range of communicative media.
- Reflective:** Immersion in experience and expression allows learners to reflect on what they feel, think, and learn.
- Social:** Learning is always socially constructed and often interactional.
- Collaborative:** Cooperative learning opportunities tap the social power of learning.
- Democratic:** The classroom is a model of community; students learn what they live as citizens of the school.

- Cognitive:** The most powerful learning comes when children develop true understanding of concepts through higher-order thinking associated with various fields of inquiry and through self-monitoring of their thinking.
- Developmental:** Children grow through a series of definable but not rigid stages.
- Constructivist:** Children recreate and reinvent cognitive systems based on direct experience.
- Challenging:** Students learn best when faced with genuine challenges, choices, and responsibility for their learning.

Title II Funds

Title II funds will be used to promote the staff development goals set forth by the school board and the district staff development committee. The district staff development committee will serve as the governing body that oversees the utilization of Title II funding.