

POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Effective September 1, 2019

Township High School District 214
Arlington Heights, Illinois

September 1, 2019

TO: All EA Members
FROM: Matthew Liberatore
Director of Professional Learning and Student Services

SUBJECT: **DISTRICT 214 GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

Township High School District 214 encourages the professional growth and development of all staff members. If you are in need of assistance regarding your individual plan, please consult with your Division Head, Associate Principal, and Principal **before** taking courses. Professional growth plans must be consistent with district and building priorities and needs. You are encouraged to prepare plans that will enhance your professional growth and benefit school programs and students. All college coursework must be taken from accredited institutions and must meet all standards cited in this manual. **All programs are evaluated on a semester hour basis. Quarter hours must be converted to semester hours at a rate of 2/3 to 1. (Example: 1 quarter hour = 2/3 semester hour)**

EA Members are advised to review the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) website (www.isbe.net) for educator licensure information in preparing professional growth plans.

The Division Head/Supervisor will meet with the EA Member and conduct a discussion on professional growth emphasizing building and district goals.

An Associate Principal will review the district's policies and procedures with the EA Member.

The Principal will approve the plan and forward it to the Director of Professional Learning.

The following summaries of District Policies and Procedures are in accordance with the 2019-2024 Cumulative Agreement and are provided to assist you in planning and in developing both your Professional Growth and Graduate Study Plans. They apply to all areas of professional growth.

I. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

The term "teacher" shall be used in this document hereafter to refer to an EA staff member.

A. Cumulative Agreement Section 3.600.3(1) Salary Schedule - Evidence of Professional Advancement and Evaluation

A teacher's yearly vertical step advancement may be denied for either of the following reasons:

1. A vertical step may be denied a tenured teacher if he/she does not present a program of at least three (3) semester hours of college

credit, or its equivalent, **related to** his/her teaching field to the Building Principal at least one week prior to the end of the school year in which the teacher is in the **sixth, eleventh, fifteenth, nineteenth, and twenty-third salary step.**

The decision as to what constitutes "equivalent credit" or "related to the teacher's teaching field" shall be the Principal's. A step will still be denied even though a proper program was submitted, if evidence of successful completion of this program is not presented to the Principal during the first quarter of the school year following the **sixth, eleventh, fifteenth, nineteenth, and twenty-third salary step.**

If a step advance is denied, the teacher may, by submitting proper verification of credit during the third quarter, be advanced one step on the salary schedule for the second semester.

Each Building's Associate Principal for Instruction or his/her designee shall notify all teachers eligible for advancement to the **sixth, eleventh, fifteenth, nineteenth, or twenty-third salary steps by August 15** of the year prior to the teacher's advancement and explain the requirement involved.

All professional growth credits for vertical advancement completed by a tenured teacher must be in his/her teaching field and approved by the Director of Professional Learning and the Principal. Courses that qualify for the three-hour requirement for vertical advancement include one or more of the following areas of focus: **content, ELL, special education, reading, writing, social/emotional learning, and approved programs (masters, +30, +60, and Post 60).**

You must file a plan in accordance with district policies and procedures. Those who are at the M+60 level will need to show professional growth for vertical advancement must access their Plus 60 plan and have pre-approval before taking the course(s).

To access the online Professional Growth System, go to

<http://www.protraxx.com/ADlogin.aspx>

ONCE COURSES ARE ENTERED, YOU MUST SUBMIT FOR APPROVAL TO YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR IN ORDER FOR YOUR REQUEST TO BE PROCESSED. FINAL APPROVAL WILL APPEAR ON YOUR PLAN AS A "YES" IN THE 3-HOUR COLUMN. A "NO" SIGNIFIES THE COURSE IS APPROVED FOR THE HOURS TOWARDS YOUR LANE CHANGE, BUT NOT THE 3-HOUR VERTICAL ADVANCEMENT.

2. A tenured teacher may also be denied a vertical advancement on the salary schedule on the basis of performance. (See Section 3.600.3(2) of the Cumulative Agreement)

- C. Staff members may qualify for professional growth increments through satisfactory professional service and evidence of one or more of the following:
1. Completion of three semester hours, or the equivalent, of college credit, or its equivalent, **related to** his/her teaching field in an accredited school or other institution such as a trade school or an educational workshop approved by the Principal and the Director of Professional Learning. Completion must be documented with official college transcripts or appropriate certificates of completion.
 2. Credits may also be granted for individually initiated activities that **are pre-approved** by the Principal and the Director of Professional Learning and documented upon completion. **Such activities must occur on non-school time for which the staff member is not paid and must be related to the staff member's District 214 responsibilities. No credit will be given for any activities for which the district pays any portion of fees or expenses for participation.** Time and performance requirements should be equivalent to graduate study.
- D. Guidelines for Individual Proposed Professional Growth, M+30, M+60, and Post 60 Credit
1. Credit for individually initiated professional development experiences may be applied to requirements for professional growth at the **sixth, eleventh, fifteenth, nineteenth, and twenty-third salary steps**, to M+30, M+60, or Post 60 plans, if pre-approved and verified in the prescribed manner.
 2. Principals will continue to approve M+30, M+60, and Post 60 plans considered acceptable and will submit them to the Director of Professional Learning.
 3. Experiences that qualify for credit must occur on **non-school time** and on time for which the staff member **is not paid. No credit will be given for any activities for which the district pays any portion of fees or expenses for participation.**
 4. Experiences that qualify must be learning activities directly related to the staff member's responsibilities in District 214.
 5. A maximum of eight individual credits may be applied to post Master's plans -- four to the M+30 plan and four to the M+60 plan.

6. Credit may be awarded for educational travel, work experiences, and other types of experiences as indicated in the plan that has been **pre-approved** by the Principal and the Director of Professional Learning. The amount of credit to be awarded will vary and will be dependent upon the outcome of the experience and the degree of difficulty in relation to comparable university credit. As a general rule, **one credit may be awarded for each 15 hours of activity that can be justified as learning time.**
7. A staff member who wishes to receive credit for work experience, educational travel, service to the community, or any other individually initiated professional development experience will be responsible for designing the proposed plan and obtaining approval from supervisors. The staff member must enter the activity on his/her plan and include as many details as possible (choosing *Individual Professional Learning* as the University).
8. The proposal must be submitted to the Division Head or immediate supervisor who will forward it to the Associate Principal for Instruction and then the Principal.
9. Upon receipt of building approval, the proposal will be forwarded to the Director of Professional Learning for review and approval.
10. Upon completion of the work associated with the individual plan, the staff member must submit a "**Verification of Individual Professional Growth Experience**" to his/her supervisor and Principal. Upon approval by the Principal, a copy will be submitted to the Director of Professional Learning for approval. The staff member should be available to meet with either or both individuals upon request.

To access the online Professional Growth System, go to
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II. GRADUATE STUDIES

- A. All graduate study to be applied for credit on the salary schedule must be approved by the administration according to established procedures.

1. Master's Degree

Teachers are expected to earn their Master's degree by step fifteen. A teacher's yearly vertical step advancement will be denied for not completing the Master's degree within this time period. Exceptions must be approved by the Associate Superintendent for Human Resources.

2. M+30 Lane

To qualify for the M+30 lane on the salary schedule, a staff member must complete an approved M+30 plan after being accepted on the Master's lane. This plan must be approved by the Director of Professional Learning.

3. M+60 Lane

A teacher may qualify for the M+60 lane by completing an "earned" Doctorate degree from an accredited institution or by completing an approved M+60 plan after being accepted on the M+30 lane. This plan must be approved by the Director of Professional Learning.

4. Post 60 Plan (no lane)

B. Graduate Studies Procedures

Teachers are encouraged to pursue a Master's degree in their content/subject area. Those who do not have a major in the content area(s) in which they actually teach are encouraged to get approval for a plan of course work that will lead to a major in the content area(s).

Pre-approval is required for work undertaken to meet the requirements of a Master's degree, Master's +30 plan, Master's +60 plan, and Post 60 plan. In rare cases, approval may be given within six (6) months after courses are taken if the supervisor determines that courses are consistent with the professional growth plan.

All college course work must be taken from accredited institutions. **A grade of B or higher must be achieved in classes with the acceptance of one C only in the M+30 program and one C only in the M+60 program. No grades of C will be accepted for undergraduate courses. In all cases, grades of D are not acceptable.**

Online Graduate Coursework Guidelines

•Approval (signature process) for online courses and degree programs will follow the standard approval process.

•Unlimited amount of online graduate hours will qualify for reimbursement if they meet the following criteria:

- Course must be taught directly by an accredited institution of higher learning
- Course must allow EA member to receive multiple opportunities for feedback from instructor.
- Course must allow EA member to communicate with other students taking the course

•Staff members can demonstrate these criteria by providing course syllabi or other official university documents that illustrate the conditions under which the course would be taught.

•Online degree programs will follow the above guidelines and be approved as an entire program.

1. Master's Degree 3.600 Salary Schedule - Cumulative Agreement

a. Course work must be completed before the first day of the first semester for advancement first semester and by the first day of the second semester for advancement second semester. Confirmation of completed work must be received in the Professional Learning Office by the last day of the first quarter for advancement first semester and by the last day of the third quarter for advancement second semester. Only official transcripts (with seal) will be accepted.

Notation of degree title and date degree awarded must be on the official transcript.

b. **GUIDELINE - MAXIMUM OF SIX SEMESTER HOURS PER SEMESTER -- TWELVE HOURS IN SUMMER.** Exceptions may be made in the plan (**before courses are taken**) upon pre-approval of the Principal/Director and the Director of Professional Learning

c. Teachers in Master's degree programs requiring more than thirty-eight (38) but less than sixty (60) hours may apply the additional hours toward an M+30 or M+60 program. For example, in a Master's program of 40 hours (two hours more than thirty-eight), two hours may be applied in the M+30 or M+60 program. This provision is not retroactive but will apply to those currently enrolled in a program (not

completed) or beginning such a program as of August 21, 2000. In accordance with Section 3.613 of the Cumulative Agreement, Master's degrees of 60 or more semester hours will result in M+30 placement on the salary schedule.

- d. Independent study, correspondence programs, self-paced course, and others in which there are not frequent and regular in-person class meetings and ongoing interaction with an instructor, are not acceptable for Master's degree work.

2. **Master's +30, Master's +60, and Post 60**

Course work must be completed before the first day of the first semester for advancement first semester and by the first day of the second semester for advancement second semester. Confirmation of completed work must be received in the office of Professional Learning by the last day of the first quarter for advancement first semester and by the last day of the third quarter for advancement second semester. Only official transcripts (with seal) will be accepted. The following types of professional activities may apply, if **pre-approved**, by administrators and documented in the prescribed manner:

- a. Must be post Master's work.
- b. Credits were not used toward the Bachelor's or Master's degree.
- c. Teachers in Master's degree programs requiring more than thirty-eight (38) but less than sixty (60) hours may apply the additional hours toward an M+30 or M+60 program. For example, in a Master's program of 40 hours (two hours more than thirty-eight), two hours may be applied in the M+30 or M+60 program. -In accordance with Section 3.613 of the Cumulative Agreement, Master's degrees of 60 or more semester hours will result in M+30 placement on the salary schedule. The teacher must provide verification that the 60 hours are a requirement of the degree.
- d. Credit is earned for activities that are directly related to the staff member's professional responsibilities.
- e. The graduate credits must be reviewed and pre-approved by the building Division Head/Supervisor, Associate Principal, Principal and the Director of Professional Learning.

- f. **Undergraduate Courses Taken After The Bachelor's Degree Has Been Completed.** In rare cases, specialized courses taken for undergraduate credit may be considered because of their relevance to the staff member's responsibilities. The **maximum** undergraduate credit is ten (10) semester hours. If district and building needs warrant it, exceptions may be made in the plan (**before courses are taken**) upon approval of the Director of Professional Learning.

FOR MASTER'S +30 ONLY: Should a building initiative require teachers to enroll in specialized courses, such courses if recommended and pre-approved by the Principal and the Director of Professional Learning may be taken before the Master's degree and credited in the M+30 program (such as the ISBE approved Mentor Program).

- h. **If pre-approved in accordance with Policies and Procedures for Professional Growth,** content courses offered by professional organizations in unique and specialized areas only (i.e. Automotive Instruction), will be accepted in M+30 and M+60 programs at a rate of fifteen hours of attendance for one hour of District 214 professional growth credit.

Content courses in continuing education units (CEU's) sponsored by and limited to professional organizations for Psychologists, Trainers, and Social Workers will also be awarded at a rate of fifteen hours of attendance for one hour of District 214 professional growth credit. A maximum of fifteen credit hours in each of the M+30 and M+60 programs will be accepted from courses from professional organizations.

- i. **Summer Institute (As Distinguished From School And District Summer Workshops) Activities For Which Credit Is Not Awarded.** Staff members may receive credit at the rate of one semester hour for each week of full-time participation in the institute, provided that the institute is included in the M+30 and/or M+60 plan, and the participation can be documented in the prescribed manner.

- j. **Individually Initiated Activities Must Be Pre-approved Using The Form And Guidelines For "Individually Initiated Activities".** These activities are pre-approved on the graduate study plan by the Principal and Director of Professional Learning and verified (using Form C) with the Principal upon completion. A **maximum of four (4) hours**

of individually initiated credits may be applied to each of the M+30 and M+60 plans.

- k. **District 214 Sponsored Staff Development Workshops/Internal University Courses Which Occur On Non-School Time And For Which The Staff Member Is Not Paid.** These workshop/courses must have been approved by the District and must also have been **pre-approved** on the M+30, M+60, and/or Post 60 plan. Completion must be documented by the person responsible for the activity. **Please Note: No credit will be given for workshops and/or conferences for which the district pays any portion of fees or expenses for participation.**

- l. **GUIDELINE - MAXIMUM OF SIX SEMESTER HOURS PER SEMESTER -- TWELVE HOURS IN SUMMER.** Exceptions may be made in the plan (**before courses are taken**), upon pre-approval of the Principal and Director of Professional Learning.

- m. A grade of B or higher must be achieved in classes with the acceptance of one C only in the M+30 program and one C only in the M+60 program. No grades of C will be accepted for undergraduate courses. In all cases grades of D are not acceptable.

- n. A maximum of four (4) hours related to a teacher's co-curricular responsibilities will be accepted.

- o. Correspondence, video, self-paced, or teleconference courses will not be accepted.

- p. No reimbursement will be provided for practicums, internships, dissertation study or thesis hours unless University credit and grades are provided for such experiences.

C. **Completion of Plans**

1. Gather all transcripts and press the blue "submit graduate study plan for closure" button and submit to your API for approval. **To access the online Professional Growth System, go to**

<http://www.protraxx.com/ADlogin.aspx>

Send official transcripts to the Professional Learning office.

2. Your completion will be forwarded to the Principal and Director of Professional Learning.

3. The District provides a one-time bonus for successful completion of a Master's degree in content area, Doctorate Degree and National Board Certification.
 - a. A \$1,000 bonus will be given upon completion of a Master's degree in content area;
 - b. A \$2,000 bonus will be given upon completion of a pre-approved Doctorate degree;
 - c. A \$1,000 bonus will be given upon completion of and eligibility for the National Board Certification;
 - d. Upon completion, the teacher should send a request for the BONUS FORM, sign and return to the Professional Learning Department for processing.

E. Procedures for Lane Changes for Salary Purposes

1. Following approval by the Director of Professional Learning, the appropriate payroll/personnel change form will be forwarded to the Human Resources and the Payroll Departments, for processing. The staff member will be advised by email from the office of Professional learning when the process has been completed.