



3.07 Professional Growth

3. Human Resources - Administrative Procedure Manual

To achieve the goals of the Pine Creek School Division, we believe that the teaching staff must continue to learn and develop new skills throughout their teaching career in order to maximize the learning of the students within the school division. The teaching skills and competencies which teachers possess and apply within their classroom are indicated out in the Divisional Teaching Standards (Appendix 1).

The Pine Creek School Division recognizes that a teacher employed in the division will be in one of three differing career situations. Three separate tracks are in place to focus on the growth and development of each professional within the school division.

The three tracks are as follows:

Track 1 - Evaluative Track - For teachers new to the school division, who are non-tenured, believe to be in need of assistance and may include teachers who are new to a particular assignment. Each teacher new to the division will be formally evaluated by both the Principal and the Superintendent in relation to the Divisional Teaching Standards (Appendix 1). Where a personal relationship exists between the teacher and one of the evaluators the Superintendent will assume the evaluator's responsibilities. Teachers who are new to a particular assignment may be evaluated; however, the decision to evaluate or not to evaluate will be made jointly by the Principal and the Superintendent. If the teacher is to be evaluated they will be placed on the Evaluative Track. If the decision is made not to evaluate, the teacher will be placed on the Developmental Track. See Section 1 and Appendix 2 for more detailed explanation of the Evaluative Track.

Track 2 - Developmental Track – This is the Supervision for Growth Track based on the professional growth model. We believe that once teachers, as professionals, have demonstrated that they have achieved a level of competency, they have both a desire and a responsibility for their continued professional growth and development. In accordance with this belief we have established this track in order to offer teachers the opportunity to grow and develop as professionals. This track is compulsory for all tenured staff deemed to be competent in the Divisional Teaching Standards. See Section 2 and Appendix 3 for more detailed explanation, commonly asked questions, sample professional growth plans and basic forms associated with the Developmental Track.

Track 3 - Competency Track- Occasionally there are teachers within the school division who are not demonstrating their basic competency in the Divisional Teaching Standards. When this situation occurs and the teacher's employment status is being reviewed, they will be placed on the Competency Track. This track is reserved for those tenured teachers whose competency and employment status is being assessed. See Section 3 for more detailed explanation of Competency Track and Appendix 4 for Sample Plans of Assistance.

Track Placement – Both the Principal and the Superintendent have the authority for determining on which track a teacher is placed. This decision is normally made in September but may occur at any point during the year. When a teacher who has previously been on the Developmental track is moved to another track they shall be notified in writing of the change. Although a teacher may stay on the competency track for up to two years, either the Principal or the Superintendent may move them back to the Developmental Track at any point.

Section 1: The Evaluative Track

Track 1 - Evaluative Track – Section 1 - The track is designed for teachers new to the school division; those who are non-tenured; those who are viewed as being in need of assistance and may include those teachers new to a particular teaching assignment where the Principal and Superintendent have jointly decided that evaluation is warranted. It is expected that all teachers who are evaluated will demonstrate that they have achieved basic competency in The Divisional Teaching Standards in their particular teaching assignment.

Teachers who are on the developmental track may be simultaneously involved in the evaluative track. This would be in addition to the developmental track.

The evaluative track is designed to:

1. To improve instruction.
2. Assist and determine the competency of teachers new to the division. It provides the school division with an opportunity to assess the teacher's suitability for employment and provides the teacher with an opportunity to demonstrate that they are meeting the Divisional Teaching Standards (Appendix 1).
3. Provide a performance appraisal for experienced teachers who request it. Experienced teachers who are demonstrating basic competency in the Divisional Teaching Standards may request that they be evaluated and be placed on the evaluative track. This would be in addition to the developmental track.
4. Assist experienced teachers in need of help. Experienced teachers may on occasion encounter difficulty where they require help and support from administration. Both the Principal and Superintendent have the responsibility and authority to identify experienced teachers who are in need of assistance and are being placed on the evaluative track. The decision to place a teacher on the evaluative track may be influenced by a number of factors: observation of the teacher's teaching, interaction with students, student complaints, parent complaints, or other relevant information.

Evaluative Process - Teachers will be evaluated in relation to the Divisional Teaching Standards. The Divisional Teaching Standards are not meant to be used as a checklist and teacher evaluations will not incorporate all aspects of them. Evaluative reports will identify areas where teachers do not demonstrate competency in the Divisional Teaching Standards as well as areas where competency is demonstrated.

Teachers who are experiencing difficulty will be provided with information identifying specific areas where improvement is expected. They will be given an opportunity to achieve competency in the Divisional Teaching Standards. Once administration is confident that they are demonstrating competency, they will be moved to the Developmental Track. The responsibility for evaluating teachers on the evaluative track will be shared by the Principal and the Superintendent.

Teachers on the Evaluative Track will receive a minimum of two formal reports from their Principal and one formal report from the Superintendent over the School Year. Each formal report is to be based upon a minimum of forty minutes of classroom observation. Teachers will not normally stay on the evaluative track for more than one year. It is expected that at the end of the year teachers will be moved to the developmental track if they have demonstrated that they achieved competency in the Divisional Teaching Standards. If they have not demonstrated competency in the Divisional Teaching Standards there are three potential courses of action:

- 1) A teacher's employment may be terminated.
- 2) A teacher may be required to stay on the evaluative track for an additional period of time

- 3) A teacher may be moved to the Competency Track.

Section 2: The Developmental or Professional Growth Track

Track 2 - The Developmental or Professional Growth Track (see Appendix 3) - is compulsory for experienced teachers who have mastered the Divisional Teaching Standards – Basic Competencies.

Teachers who are on the evaluative track may choose to simultaneously develop a professional growth plan and be part of the developmental track. The development of a professional growth plan is considered to be optional for those teachers who are on the evaluative track.

The developmental track is designed to:

1. Provide experienced teachers with the opportunity to continue to grow and develop as professionals.
2. Provide teachers with the opportunity to assume responsibility for their own professional development and growth as a professional.

Section 3: The Competency Track

Track 3 - Competency Track (see Appendix 4) - The Competency Track focus on those teachers whose competency and employment status is being assessed. It is reserved for tenured teachers who, are in the opinion of the of the Principal not demonstrating an acceptable level of competency in the Divisional Teaching Standards. Normally teachers who are placed on the Competency Track will have previously been on the evaluative track and will have at least three evaluative reports written in the previous ten months indicating a concern. Teachers may be placed on the Competency Track at any time during the school year.

Teachers will be notified in writing when they are placed on the Competency Track.

Teachers who are placed on the Competency Track are expected to be involved in the process of developing a Plan of Assistance. A Plan of Assistance will only be completed after at least three formal evaluative reports have been written with each indicating a similar concern. The plan is to be developed jointly by the teacher involved, the principal, the superintendent and anyone else that they mutually agree can positively contribute to the planning and development of the plan.

The plan will identify:

- Areas of concern
- Performance Expectations for the teacher
- Professional development opportunities which will be offered.
- Other resources which will support the teacher in their effort to improve.

Teachers placed on the Competency Track will be observed and evaluated by both the Principal and by the Superintendent. Each observation will be followed by a post conference and a formal evaluative report. Teachers will not be kept on the Competency Track for more than two consecutive years. Teachers on the Competency Track may be moved to another Track at any point. Those teachers who have been place on the Competency Track will have their track placement reviewed in September of each year.

Appendix 2 - Evaluative Track

Non-tenured teachers and teachers new to the school division will be evaluated by both the Principal and by the Superintendent. Teachers new to a particular teaching assignment may be evaluated by the Principal.

In situations where there is a change in assignment but where the Principal does not feel an evaluation is necessary the principal and Superintendent may jointly decide not to evaluate the

teacher. Teachers on the evaluative track will not be evaluated any more often than once every three years.

The Principal is required to write at least two formal evaluative reports during the school year. The Superintendent is required to write at least one formal evaluative report. Each of these formal evaluations is to include a pre-conference, classroom observation of at least forty minutes and a post-conference.

Pre-conference - Prior to the actual observation the evaluator will meet with the teacher to identify: the type of lesson which will be observed, subject area, teaching strategy which will be employed etc.; what the teacher will be doing during the observation; what students will be expected to do during the observation; and, any particular concerns or special information regarding the lesson or particular group of students which the evaluator should be aware of.

Observation - Each formal observation will be a minimum of forty minutes in length. During the formal observation the evaluator will collect data, which represents what is occurring in the class. This may be anecdotal comments of the evaluator or might include another data collection technique.

Post Conference - It is expected that the post-conference will occur as soon as conveniently possible.

During the post-conference it is expected that the evaluator will share any relevant information, data, comments and suggestions about the lesson observed. It is also expected that the evaluator will ask any questions which they may have about the lesson which they have observed. The post-conference will generally occur prior to writing the formal report.

Formal Report - The formal report will provide a brief description of what was observed during the class.

It is expected that it will contain positive comments where positive aspects of instruction are observed and will also contain suggestions for improvement where in the opinion of the evaluator changes to instruction will improve the learning of students. A sample format for an evaluative report is attached.

Sources of Data - The two required evaluative reports will be based on teaching observations.

Student Opinion Surveys - Student opinion surveys are considered to be a reliable source of information and may be included in any additional reports which are generated. The decision to use student opinion surveys or not to use student surveys is a matter of personal choice and will be made by teacher. The use of student opinion surveys is encouraged but is voluntary. The results of student opinion surveys are the property of the classroom teacher and it is their decision if they are shared with others or if they are included in evaluative reports. The use of student data represents a shift from measuring and recording observable teacher behaviours to assessing the ability of a teacher to excite and motivate students to learn. It is also designed to provide the teacher with feedback on the role of the teacher as it has evolved. The role of the teacher is no longer one of just imparting knowledge but also of creating a setting that allows students to learn. The new role of the teacher now involves students taking greater responsibility for their own learning and a portion of the teacher's role is providing the setting for this to occur. Sample student questionnaires are attached.

The Developmental or Professional Growth Track

Supervision for growth rests on three premises: learning to teach is a lifelong endeavour; professional development can improve the quality of instruction and, therefore, enhance student

learning and improve general school quality; teachers as professionals have a desire to be in control of and assume responsibility for this professional growth.

The developmental track offers teachers the opportunity to grow and develop as professionals. This track is compulsory for all tenured staff who are not deemed to be in need of assistance. It creates a supportive climate and encourages self-directed professional growth to meet personal/professional goals.

Rationale

A. Beliefs of the Committee on Professional Growth

1. Learning to teach is a lifelong endeavour.
2. Teachers invest much time and effort to ensure that a climate for student growth exists in their classrooms. It is equally important that as professionals they make a similar investment in their own personal and professional growth.
3. A separate professional development policy (separate from an evaluation policy) offers teachers, administrators, and trustees the best possibility of real professional growth.
4. Teachers can benefit from a climate in which they are free to try new ideas and methods in an open and secure atmosphere.
5. Professional growth can best be enhanced through a collegial support system that values growth activities and provides moral support for teachers.
6. Professional growth is most effective when self-initiated.
7. Growth activities should build upon the strengths, interests and talents of each teacher and must be relevant.
8. Professional growth plans can help improve the quality of instruction and enhance student learning.
9. New and probationary teachers can also benefit from a professional growth plan.

B. Objectives of the Professional Growth Process

1. To foster a more collaborative atmosphere within schools and within the school division in which ideas, concerns, and new methods can be shared by teachers, administrators, and trustees.
2. To promote job satisfaction by making teachers more responsible for their professional development.
3. To improve classroom instruction by allowing teachers to work with colleagues in developing new and better classroom strategies and new course material.
4. To foster a climate of working together with fellow teachers, administrators, and trustees to improve education in the school system.
5. To increase the professional growth of teachers, administrators, and trustees by: formally encouraging the writing of professional growth plans; sharing the outcome of the growth plans; and recognizing efforts and achievements.
6. To encourage individuals through a collegial model to become coaches and supporters of better ideas and teaching methods.

Portfolio Construction

Teachers are encouraged to establish and maintain a portfolio containing relevant information to their work. Teachers as professional are expected to keep ongoing documentation of their work. The documentation is personally designed and constructed.

The portfolio might include: written feedback from students, outstanding achievements of individual students, successes with students at risk, correspondence with parents, correspondence with administrators and colleagues, evidence of professional growth activities such as workshops, special courses, seminars, certification and documents received, extra-curricular activities, etc.

The professional's statement of a personal philosophy of education and curriculum vitae would also be worthy portfolio entries.

The portfolio is the personal record of the individual professional and should reflect his/her individuality.

The portfolio defines his/her goals, interprets what is seen to be important in teaching. The highly personal nature of the portfolio precludes any definition of what constitutes a portfolio; there are no hard and fast rules about the elements of a portfolio. However, the portfolio should be a reflection of the teacher's teaching philosophy and practices.

Addendum A - Questions and Answers

Will a copy of the growth plan be placed in the teacher's personnel file at the Board Office?

Yes, a copy of the growth plan will be placed in the teacher's personnel file at the Board Office, so as to have documentation of professional commitment.

When may a teacher request a performance appraisal?

A teacher may request a performance appraisal at any time.

How many goals should be included in the growth plan?

A growth plan may include as many goals as can be comfortably managed.

It is important that the professional growth plan has a focus that is clear and challenging.

Does a teacher teaching in two or more schools require two or more growth plans?

No, the principals involved will agree on track placement; the teacher will decide where to carry out the growth plan.