

EPHRATA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: EMPLOYEES

TITLE: COMPENSATED
PROFESSIONAL LEAVES

ADOPTED: December 18, 2006

REVISED: January 26, 2015

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| | <p>338.1. COMPENSATED PROFESSIONAL LEAVES</p> |
| 1. Purpose | <p>This policy shall establish the district's parameters for granting professional development and classroom occupational exchange leaves for certificated administrative and professional employees.</p> |
| 2. Definitions SC 1166.1 | <p>Professional Development Leave - shall be defined as a leave of absence granted for the purpose of improving professional competency or obtaining a professional certificate or commission. Such leave shall be directly related to an employee's professional responsibilities, as determined by the Board, and be restricted to activities required by state regulation or law.</p> |
| SC 522.2 | <p>Classroom Occupational Exchange Leave - shall be defined as a leave of absence granted for the purpose of acquiring practical work experience in business, industry or government.</p> |
| 3. Authority SC 1166.1 | <p>The Board shall have sole authority to adopt and enforce policy establishing the conditions for approval of a professional development leave for eligible employees. All requests for such leave shall be subject to review by the Board. The Board may approve or reject a proposed plan for professional development leave.</p> |
| SC 522.2 | <p>The Board may grant a leave to eligible employees for classroom occupational exchange leave for the specified purpose.</p> |
| 4. Guidelines | <p>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEAVE</p> |
| SC 1166 | <p><u>Eligibility</u></p> <p>To qualify for professional development leave, an eligible employee shall have completed ten (10) years of satisfactory service in the public schools of the Commonwealth; at least five (5) consecutive years of such service shall be in this school district.</p> |

338.1. COMPENSATED PROFESSIONAL LEAVES - Pg. 2

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| <p>SC 1166</p> | <p><u>Term Of Leave</u></p> <p>A leave for professional development may be taken for a half or full school term or for two (2) half school terms during a period of two (2) years, at the employee's option.</p> <p>Full school term leaves will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.</p> |
| <p>SC 1167</p> | <p><u>Limitation On Number Of Leaves And Order Of Preference</u></p> <p>The total number of administrative employees on such leaves of absence at any given time shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the number of eligible employees. The total number of professional employees on such leaves of absence at any given time shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the number of eligible employees. All professional development leaves granted will commence on either the first day of the first half of the school term or on the first day of the second half of the school term.</p> <p>Applications for leave will be given preference according to the number of years since the employee's previous leave for professional development, the number of years of service to the district, and the distribution of the applicants among the various schools, departments, area of specialization, and the overall benefit of the leave to the district. Consideration of these and other relevant factors and final approval for leave requests is at the Board's discretion.</p> |
| <p>SC 1166.1</p> | <p><u>Request For Leave</u></p> <p>Professional development leaves shall be granted only to employees participating in an academic program for the purpose of retaining a professional certificate or commission, further preparation and improvement in an area(s) of certification, additional certification, attaining other appropriate and identifiable educational positions within the school district, or as the Board may require, and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.</p> |
| <p>SC 1166.1</p> | <p>A request for a leave of absence for professional development must be submitted by January 30 of the preceding school year. The request must include a detailed plan (e.g. course schedule) describing the professional development activities in which the employee will participate over the term of the leave, and a statement specifying the benefits of the leave to the employee and the district. The plan shall provide sufficient information to permit the Board to adequately evaluate the request.</p> |
| <p>SC 1171</p> | <p><u>Documentation</u></p> <p>The Board may at any time require additional information from the employee in order to assist the Board in determining whether the leave is being used for the purpose for which it was granted.</p> |

338.1. COMPENSATED PROFESSIONAL LEAVES - Pg. 3

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| <p>SC 1166.1</p> | <p>The minimum requirements for leave for a half school term shall consist of any one or a combination of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nine (9) graduate credits. 2. Twelve (12) undergraduate credits. 3. One hundred eighty (180) hours of professional development activities. |
| <p>SC 1166.1</p> | <p>The minimum requirements for leave for a full school term shall consist of any one or a combination of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eighteen (18) graduate credits. 2. Twenty-four (24) undergraduate credits. 3. Three hundred sixty (360) hours of professional development activities. |
| <p>SC 1166.1, 1171</p> | <p>Applicants who propose to take graduate or undergraduate credits shall submit notification of acceptance and enrollment from an accredited institution of higher learning for study in courses approved by the Superintendent. The employee shall successfully complete the approved courses and receive passing grades. Upon return from professional development leave, the employee shall submit to the Superintendent within the first month an official transcript of all courses completed. Failure to receive passing grades or to submit required transcripts on time shall result in forfeiture of monies paid by the district.</p> |
| <p>SC 1166.1, 1171</p> | <p>Applicants who propose to undertake professional development activities shall submit to the Board a detailed plan listing the specific activities. Upon return from professional development leave, the employee shall submit to the Superintendent within the first month a formal report describing the educational activities pursued and their benefits and relevancy. Failure to submit required reports on time shall result in forfeiture of monies paid by the district.</p> <p><u>Commitment Of Employee</u></p> |
| <p>SC 1166.1, 1168</p> | <p>Acceptance of professional development leave incurs a commitment by the employee to return to active duty in this district immediately following the leave for one (1) full school term, unless prevented by illness or physical disability.</p> |
| <p>SC 1168</p> | <p>If the employee does not return to employment at the expiration of the leave, unless prevented by illness or physical disability, the employee forfeits all benefits to which s/he was entitled for the period of the leave. If the employee fails to return, the amount contributed by the district to the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) will be deducted from the refund payable to the employee.</p> |

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| | <p>Upon completion of the leave, the employee shall provide to the Board evidence that the employee fully complied with the plan during the leave, unless prevented from doing so by illness or physical disability. If the employee fails to submit sufficient evidence, unless prevented from doing so by illness or physical disability, the employee forfeits all benefits to which the employee was entitled during the period of leave.</p> <p><u>Commitment Of Employer</u></p> <p>SC 1168 At the expiration of the professional development leave, the employee shall be reinstated in the same position held at the time of the granting of the leave.</p> <p>SC 522.1, 1170 Any employee who is granted a professional development leave under this policy shall be considered in regular, full-time daily attendance during the period of the leave for purposes of determining seniority and for retirement fund purposes, but for no other purpose.</p> <p><u>Salary And Benefits While On Leave</u></p> <p>SC 1169 Any employee who is granted a professional development leave under this policy will receive at least one-half of his/her regular salary during the term of the leave.</p> <p>The employee will also be entitled to continuation of health insurance benefits during the period of the leave.</p> <p>SC 1166 A leave of absence granted for professional development shall also serve as a leave of absence without pay from all other school activities.</p> <p><u>Retirement Payments</u></p> <p>SC 1170 Any employee who is granted a professional development leave under this policy will continue membership in PSERS. The district will pay into PSERS on behalf of the employee, during the period of the leave, both the contribution required by law to be made by the district and the contribution required by law to be made by the employee. The amount of the contribution required to be made by the employee will be deducted from the compensation payable to the employee while on leave.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CLASSROOM OCCUPATIONAL EXCHANGE LEAVE</p> <p><u>Application</u></p> <p>Requests for classroom occupational exchange leave shall be submitted on the approved district form and forwarded with appropriate documentation to the Superintendent.</p> |
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338.1. COMPENSATED PROFESSIONAL LEAVES - Pg. 5

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| | <p><u>Documentation</u></p> <p>Applicants for classroom occupational exchange leave shall submit with the application form a statement from the employer agreeing to the terms and conditions of the leave, as specified in Board policy.</p> |
| SC 522.2, 1166.1, 1171 | <p>Upon return from such leave, the employee shall submit to the Board a final report detailing the work experience and its benefits.</p> |
| | <p><u>Commitment Of Employee</u></p> |
| SC 1168 | <p>Acceptance of classroom occupational exchange leave incurs a commitment by the employee to return to active duty in this district immediately following the leave for one (1) full school term, unless prevented by illness or physical disability.</p> |
| | <p><u>Commitment Of Employer</u></p> |
| SC 1168 | <p>At the expiration of the classroom occupational exchange leave, the employee shall be reinstated in the same position held at the time of the granting of the leave.</p> |
| SC 522.2 | <p>Time on classroom occupational exchange leave shall be counted as time on the job for purposes of seniority and for retirement fund purposes, but for no other purpose.</p> |
| | <p><u>Compensation</u></p> |
| SC 522.2 | <p>The business, industry or government to whom the employee is assigned during the leave shall fully compensate the school district for all salary, wages, pension and retirement contributions, and other benefits as if the employee were in full-time active service.</p> |
| | <p>References:</p> <p>School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 522.1, 522.2, 1166, 1166.1, 1167, 1168, 1169, 1170, 1171</p> |