

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROGRAM

Covering All Classified Employees

I. PURPOSE.

To provide each employee an opportunity to improve job skills or choose an alternate career path through the Professional Growth Program.

II. ELIGIBILITY. Only **permanent** employees are eligible to begin Professional Growth plans. **Probationary** employees may be eligible for release time if requested by their departments; however, no Professional Growth points will be earned.

III. ENROLLMENT.

- a. **Notices** are sent to all eligible employees in time to enroll in the Professional Growth Program for the fall, spring, and summer sessions.
- b. Employees must attend at least one **Professional Growth Training Workshop** before submitting program for approval.
- c. Professional growth plans **must be job-related or part of a specific career plan**. The benefits of the plan to the District and to the employee must be identified by the employee before the plan can be approved.
- d. **Transcripts** must be submitted along with the Declaration of Intent.
- e. Programs must be **submitted in writing** by completing all required forms.
- f. The **deadline for submission to Human Resource Services** is stated in the general notice, usually no later than one week prior to registration for the fall, spring, or summer sessions. It is recommended to list alternate courses in the event some courses aren't available. ALL classes require prior approval.
- g. The Professional Growth Committee will notify the employee in writing of the **Committee's decision** regarding the program submitted.
- h. Programs must be **completed within three (3) years** from date of initial approval. When employees complete a program before the three-year period has ended and they are ready to start program #2, they must submit a new plan to the Committee for approval.

IV. GUIDELINES.

- a. Full-time employees may be allowed to take up to **four (4) hours of class per week during work time (release time) if the class is directly related to the employee's current job** as determined by the Assistant Superintendent /Vice President, Human Resource Services. Permanent employees on less than 100% contract will be eligible for a corresponding percentage of release time. Probationary employees and permanent employees not enrolled in a Professional Growth Plan may still be eligible for release time at the request of their departments. The Assistant Superintendent/Vice President, Human Resource Services must approve all such requests.
- b. Credit may be earned for **seminars and workshops attended during release time** which will improve the level of job performance or skill, **provided the employee pays any expenses incurred.** Advance written approval is required. No credit is earned for workshops, conferences, or classes paid by the District.
- c. Credit may be earned for **courses, seminars, and workshops** that are job-related, part of a career plan, or that would benefit the District. Workshops sponsored by or offered by the CCE/AFT or their state or national affiliate are included.
- d. No credit is earned for **personal enrichment** courses, workshops, and/or seminars.
- e. **No professional growth credit** is given for:
 - an audited class;
 - course work requested by a supervisor and taken during the employee's work time;
 - courses taken while on a paid educational leave;
 - courses taken at levels below or equal to previous successfully completed course work unless justification is approved by the committee;
 - courses paid for by the District.
- f. Professional growth credit may be granted for **credit by examination** only if that course is a requirement for the degree/certificate program being pursued.
- g. A **course may be repeated** for Professional Growth credit if the college catalog allows repetition of that course for credit.
- h. **Regional Occupational Program (ROP) courses** may be taken as part of a Professional Growth Plan, provided that they are job-related and/or part of a stated career path. Points will be awarded according to whether the courses are taken for college credit or as non-credit courses. Payment is not required for non-credit ROP courses to earn Professional Growth points.

- i. A **grade of "C" or better** must be earned. If letter grades are not given for a course, a letter of satisfactory completion, duly signed by the instructor, is required.
- j. Attendance at **conventions**, participation in setting up **regional workshops**, or serving on a **state committee** will be subject to approval providing it is job or career-change related. Advance written approval is required. (A copy of the convention program, registration verification, and a report on the convention must be submitted to the Professional Growth Committee following attendance at such conventions or meetings.)
- k. **Active service/membership in professional organizations, state or national committees, and other professional associations including CCE/AFT state and national associations** will be reviewed for approval by the Professional Growth Committee. Such participation must be related to the employee's current position, to a career plan, and/or benefit the District. Released time to attend approved professional organization conventions may be counted for Professional Growth credit.
- l. Employees seeking professional growth credit for participation in **professional organizations, committees, and/or associations** must provide verification of their participation. Points for active participation are limited to no more than one point per year.
- m. **Active service/membership on recognized campus governance committees and certain task forces** will be reviewed for approval by the Professional Growth committee. Points for active participation on committees are limited to .50 per year per committee.
- n. Employees who elect the **one-time \$2000 lump sum stipend must wait three years** before beginning another Professional Growth Plan. There is no waiting period between programs when employees elect the \$500 annual stipend.

V. POINT SYSTEM.

- a. The point system, as listed below, includes credit for:
 - credit courses
 - job-related adult education courses
 - attendance at job-related workshops and/or seminars
 - attendance at career-change workshops and/or seminars
 - service in professional organizations
 - service/membership on Palomar College governance committee/task force
 - Community College Exchange Program
 - The same number of points will be granted for credit courses whether they are taken in a classroom, by educational television, or online.

b. **Point Structure**

- 1) Twenty (20) Professional Growth points are required to complete a program. The entire 20 points can be earned through classroom course work. A minimum of 12 Professional Growth points must be earned through classroom course work.
- 2) No more than ten (10) points can be completed in one semester. Extensions and exceptions may be granted in certain circumstances. These must be submitted to the committee within ten (10) days of the occurrence.
- 3) The same number of points will be granted for credit courses whether they are taken in a classroom, by educational television, or online.
- 4) Points for workshops and seminars will be granted according to the hours spent in attendance or online, up to a maximum of one (1) point per workshop. (A report on the workshop or seminar, including hours spent and assessment of the program, must be filed on the Professional Growth form for each workshop completed.)

5)	<u>Course Work</u>	<u>Sem. Pts.</u>	<u>Qtr. Pts.</u>
	5 unit course	10	6.666
	4 unit course	8	5.333
	3 unit course	6	3.999
	2 unit course	4	2.666
	1 unit course	2	1.333
	15 week non-credit course	3	
	8 week non-credit course	1.5	

6)	<u>Workshops/Seminars</u>	<u>Points*</u>
	1-2 hours	.25
	3-4 hours	.50
	5-6 hours	.75
	7-8 hours	1.00

*(Hours may be accumulated within a 3-year program toward points.)

- 7) Professional Organizations
No more than one point per year (*see IV.k. and IV.l.*)
- 8) Governance Committees/Task Forces
.50 per year per committee (*see IV.m.*)
- 9) Community College Exchange Program
One point for each two (2) working months of participation up to a maximum of six (6) points.

VI. REQUESTS FOR CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO PROGRAM.

Changes/additions require prior written approval and must be submitted for consideration to the Professional Growth Committee. If an employee receives notification of a workshop after the deadline for submission, the paperwork may be filled out and submitted along with a copy of the flyer attached, to Human Resources so that it can be date stamped. This must be done before the workshop takes place. The committee will then review the request at the next regularly scheduled Professional Growth meeting.

VII. COMPLETION PROCEDURE.

It is the responsibility of the classified employee to apply for Professional Growth credit and to verify completion of the program no later than February 15, July 15, or September 15 of the semester following program completion.

Full-time permanent employees, as well as part-time permanent employees, apply for the stipend when 20 Professional Growth points have been accumulated. Notice of Completion form and supporting documentation shall be submitted to Human Resource Services. Supporting documentation consists of grade cards, transcripts, certificates, or in the case of non-credit courses, a statement of completion by the instructor verifying course completion.

VIII. STIPENDS.

- a. Eligible employees may earn a total of five (5) stipends during the course of their employment. Employees with more than five (5) stipends who are enrolled in an approved Professional Growth program prior to July 1, 1994 will be allowed to complete the program and receive the stipend if the program is completed successfully within the time allowed. Employees who currently have more than five (5) stipends will continue to receive all stipends but are not eligible to earn additional stipends.
- b. Full-time permanent employees, as well as part-time permanent employees, have the option to receive an annual stipend of \$500 in pro-rated monthly payments or to receive a one-time lump sum stipend of \$2000. Annual and lump sum stipends may be combined up to a total of five (5) stipends. The selection of an option is irrevocable.
- c. Employees who elect the one-time \$2000 lump sum stipend must wait three (3) years before beginning another Professional Growth Plan. There is no waiting period between programs when employees elect the \$500 annual stipend.

- d. The Professional Growth Committee secretary (Human Resource Services) evaluates the employee's Notice of Completion and recommends the earned stipend to the Superintendent/ President.
- e. Stipends shall become effective when recommended by the Superintendent/ President and approved by the Governing Board. Recommendations are normally submitted to the Governing Board three times a year after the deadline for submission of September 15, February 15, and July 15. Stipends are retroactive to September 1, February 1, and July 1 of the semester in which they are approved.

IX. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.

- a. Committee members are appointed by the CCE/AFT, C.A.S.T., and Administrative Association. The Professional Growth Committee shall elect a chairperson.
- b. Committee members represent the following employee groups:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Representatives</u>
Service/Skilled Crafts	1
Secretarial/Clerical	3
Technical/Paraprofessional/Professional	2
Confidential/Supervisory	2
Administrative	1

- c. If employee group representation quotas from the above groups cannot be met in a given term, committee members may be selected from another employee group.
- d. Committee members must abstain from voting on their own plan approval.
- e. The Administrative Assistant of the Human Resource Services Department will serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee. The Assistant Superintendent /Vice President for Human Resource Services shall serve as an advisor to the Professional Growth Committee.