

CBRS D PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2006-2007

MISSION

Our mission is to improve student learning and to assist educators in enhancing subject-matter knowledge to develop student understanding. This will be accomplished by providing professional development opportunities which address individual, school, district, state and federal improvement goals and assist educators and support staff in meeting re-licensure and Highly Qualified requirements.

PURPOSE

The purpose of high quality professional development is to improve student learning. It emphasizes content-based offerings and fosters a professional learning community which encourages teachers to work together. High quality professional development provides a variety of opportunities for ongoing growth that promote coherent systemic approaches to ongoing improvement in teaching and learning. Effective professional development results in new learning evident in changed behavior, which is gained by opportunities to become aware, observe, practice, reflect, and refine. It includes the method and procedures for evaluating quality of each offering

CHARACTERISTICS

(Based upon Massachusetts 2001 Statewide Plan for Professional Development)

- Supports Professional Practice and Student Performance
- Provides Sufficient Time and Resources
- Promotes Collegiality and Collaboration
- Emphasizes Knowledge-Based Content and Process
- Encourages Experimentation and Appropriate Risk-Taking
- Participant Involvement
- Offers Leadership Opportunities
- Supports a Variety of Approaches
- Fosters Coherence among Organizational and Individual Goals

DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

<i>Align local curricula with seven curriculum frameworks</i>	Insure that curriculum, instruction, and assessment is to be standards-based.
<i>Use student performance data</i>	Evaluate strengths and weakness of student performance to inform instruction, curriculum and program.
<i>Support reflective growth and change</i>	Focus on the school as the center of change and foster a professional learning community that encourages teachers to work together
<i>Improve skills in all content areas with emphasis on Mathematics and ELA</i>	Raise expectations for student achievement.

DISTRICT AND INDIVIDUAL OBLIGATIONS

Much of what we do in this area is driven by contractual language. Specific references to a teacher's *Professional Development* and a Paraprofessional's *Professional Improvement* are included in Appendix A of this document.

DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Professional development is the shared responsibility of the individual and the school district. The Central Berkshire Regional School District strongly encourages all teachers to actively participate in professional development activities that address individual, school, district, state and federal needs. There will be opportunities for paraprofessionals to participate in professional development activities. Under Educational Reform, each educator is responsible for the renewal of at least one standard certificate within a five-year period. To help local educators meet this requirement, a number of different "no cost" professional development activities are offered locally.

All licensed staff are given equal access to after-school professional development programs. Additional sections of oversubscribed programs will be offered when possible. Activities may be selected from among the types of programs listed later in this section.

If the individual has an expectation of being awarded district Professional Development Points, the individual will be required to:

- 1) apply ahead of time (as is the case in any conference, course, or workshop);
- 2) demonstrate that the unit or program meets the minimum number of contact hours; and
- 3) share their learning experiences in some way with peers in a grade level or staff meeting.

For example, in the “*Samplings*” paragraph below, questions an individual could consider before initiating the activity and requesting PDP’s might be:

- How might this sampling add to my skills and content knowledge?
- How might this sampling enhance my contributions to the school community?
- How will it support school/district school improvement goals?
- How might it lead to improvement in my professional practice?

Samplings (Minimum of 10 hours)

“*Samplings*” are two or more workshop sessions or independent workshops around the same topic that help participants increase awareness around a district-wide professional development topic or goal. As a follow-up activity, participation in more in-depth professional development activities is encouraged. An example of a Professional Development Sampling would be a group of teachers taking an in-depth look at one of the many inquiry kits available from ASCD (*Association of Supervision & Curriculum Development*) or the Annenberg Channel (<http://www.learner.org/>). Upon completion of their study, they will pass along their learning to the rest of the staff with a short presentation at a staff meeting. The Professional Development Committee will maintain a professional library of these kits and make them available to all staff in the district. A list of currently available topics appear below:

Title	Media Type	Location
Community Service Learning	Inquiry Kit; video, group activities, articles, etc.	PD room Nessacus
Standards Based Education	Inquiry Kit; video, group activities, articles, etc.	PD room Nessacus
Assessing Student Performance	Inquiry Kit; video, group activities, articles, etc.	PD room Nessacus
Curriculum Integration	Inquiry Kit; video, group activities, articles, etc.	PD room Nessacus
Differentiating Instruction for Mixed-Ability Classrooms	Inquiry Kit; video, group activities, articles, etc.	PD room Nessacus
A Visit to a Differentiated Classroom	60 minute video; Online Viewer’s Guide	PD room Nessacus
Examining Student’s Work	4 25-30 min. videos with a Facilitator’s Guide	PD room Nessacus
Comprehending Content: Reading across the curriculum, Grades 6-12	4 30 minute videotapes	PD room Nessacus
Promoting Learning through Student Data	Inquiry Kit; video, group activities, articles, etc	PD room Nessacus
Teaching for Understanding	Inquiry Kit; video, group activities, articles, etc	PD room Nessacus
Using Classroom Assessment to Guide Instruction	3 videotapes with facilitator’s guide	PD room Nessacus
Reading in the Content Areas	2 videotapes	PD room Nessacus
Curriculum Mapping	2 30 minute videotapes and facilitator’s guide	PD room Nessacus
6 Trait Writing	4 short videotapes and facilitator’s guide	PD room Nessacus

Workshop Series and Study Groups (11-20 hours)

This type of offering is designed to introduce a common knowledge base and help participants learn basic skills in a given area. These sessions will take place outside of regular school hours (weekly or bi-weekly) for a specified time and will include work between sessions. Topics covered in introductory workshops may be offered at a later time in a different format (Support Groups or Intensive Study Sessions). Follow-ups to a workshop series might include attending a content related conference and include a structured study of classroom application or action research on a given topic.

Intensive Institutes (20+ hours)

“Intensive Institutes” must directly reflect current research on effective professional development. Some intensive institutes include classroom-based observations and peer coaching; some include independent work between sessions. A typical schedule for an intensive workshop series will include a combination of full days (extended evening, Saturday, or vacation day), professional days (as stipulated in the contract), and after-school workshops. State and federal grant funding are possible funding sources for these major initiatives.

Summer Workshops, Conferences, Seminars, and Institutes

The summer months provide an ideal time for participation in comprehensive professional development programs. Whenever possible, registration fees for summer activities that address at least one district-wide goal will be partially or fully funded. Once again, state and federal grant funding are possible funding sources for these activities.

District-Wide Professional Development Days

The Central Berkshire Regional School District will offer professional development activities on selected release days that are included in the school work year. Two days are set aside prior to the start of the school year for professional development activities. The Professional Development Committee will offer advice and assistance in designing the content of these days.

Staff members are encouraged to offer, lead, and/or facilitate half or full day presentations.

District Initiated Workshops, Conferences, Seminars and Institutes

District-wide teams can be formed when appropriate to attend selected professional development activities at different times through out the school year. The district will pay the reasonable cost and expenses, including fees, meals, lodging, and transportation for workshops, seminars, conferences, and other professional sessions. Follow-up activities are often required. All teachers will be given an opportunity to apply for participation on district teams.

Independent Projects/Service to the Education Profession

Individual and group projects that are developed to meet clearly defined individual professional development goals (e.g. action research, writing/publishing papers, articles, and books) and service to the education profession (e.g. membership on district, state, regional or national advisory groups) may be included in an Individual Professional Development Plan. Projects must include a sharing component and be approved in advance.

Online and Videoconference

Our district's investment in technology has opened the door to professional development opportunities that were never even conceived a few short years ago. Course work offered "on-line" offers unprecedented flexibility for staff members. Many colleges and universities have departments that specialize in distance learning. The United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) defines distance learning as:

The delivery of education or training through electronically mediated instruction including satellite, video, audio graphic, computer, multimedia technology and other forms of learning at a distance. The USDLA notes that distance education refers to teaching and learning situations in which the instructor and the learner or learners are geographically separated and therefore rely on electronic devices and print materials for instructional delivery. Distance Education includes distance teaching - the instructor's role in the process; and distance learning - the student's role in the process.

There are many examples of web sites that provide excellent online professional development. As with all coursework, preliminary approval from the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent is required.

Many of these opportunities are offered as a workshop for PDPs or a 3 credit graduate course through Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts or Westfield State College.

BUILDING-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

To the greatest extent possible, given budgetary constraints, funding for professional development activities will be allocated to each building on a per pupil basis to help address the goals outlined in individual School Improvement Plans. Building-based activities may include:

Building-Based Professional Development Days

Professional development activities may be offered at each building on selected release days. Additional release time for professional development during the school day will be granted on a limited basis by the building principal.

After-School/Evening Professional Development Activities

Building sponsored activities that occur after the regular school day may be offered on a voluntary basis.

Workshops, Conferences, Seminars and Institutes

Attendance at outside conferences and leave for professional development activities that are part of an overall plan will be supported on a limited basis. We stress the importance of direct teacher contact with students while recognizing that, under certain circumstances, participation in professional development activities can take place only during the school day. A Conference/Professional Leave Application Form is available in each building's office.

Teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff are encouraged to participate in activities that reflect current research on professional development (ongoing inquiry rather than short-term isolated events; opportunities for observation, practice, reflection and refinement); address goals outlined in individual, school improvement and district professional development plans and support improvements in teaching and learning. At times, building-based teams may be formed to attend selected professional development activities at different times through out the school year. The district will pay the reasonable cost and expenses, including fees, meals, lodging, and transportation for workshops, seminars, conferences, and other professional sessions. State and Federal grants will supplement the district's cost. Follow-up activities are generally required. All teachers will be given an opportunity to apply for participation on district teams.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Administration of professional development programs is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent of Schools in collaboration with building Principals, the Special Education Department and Professional Development Committee. A variety of activities will be offered to all educators throughout the district. Activities may also be held in each building around specific topics identified as part of the School Improvement Plan. Information about building activities will be communicated district-wide and cross-school participation sought whenever possible. Individual input is important to the committee; they who will be open to ideas and activities for professional development which support school and individual goals.

The Central Berkshire Regional School District Professional Development Committee is an integral part of the district-wide professional development program. Comprised of teacher, specialist, paraprofessional, and administrative representatives from every school in the district, Committee members serve in an advisory role for the district-wide professional development program. Meetings are held every other month and minutes are recorded.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- 1) To build a culture of inquiry about student learning through communication, resource sharing, and program development.
- 2) To maintain a process of needs assessment, resource identification, comprehensive program development, and evaluation of professional development activities based on district-wide goals.
- 3) To assist in the development of the annual District Professional Development Program.

All providers authorized by the Central Berkshire Regional School District are expected to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of professional development offerings and to assess their impact, if any, on classroom practice.
- address the content of the relevant state Curriculum Frameworks;
- conduct professional development with clear objectives, relevant learning activities, and conclusions;
- conduct professional development that recognizes the overlapping and different needs of beginning and veteran educators;
- incorporate technology tools and appropriate media, as warranted;
- build on educators' prior knowledge and experience;
- use principles of adult learning theory to engage educators in professional growth;
- employ a variety of teaching techniques such as direct instruction, practice, discussion, problem-solving, Socratic dialogue, and research projects;
- provide many and varied opportunities for educators to incorporate new knowledge and skills into classroom practice or school and district management; and,
- evaluate teacher learning through an appropriate assessment. This may be a written exam, a lesson plan or a curriculum unit, for example.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Representation on the CBRSD Professional Development Committee is based on school size. New members will be selected in May and begin their terms in October. A two-year commitment is encouraged.

The professional Development Teacher/Facilitator

One Representative each:

- Becket Washington School
- Berkshire Trail Elementary School
- Kittredge Elementary School
- Special Education Department
- Principals/Central Office
- Teachers' Association Representative

Two Representatives:

- Craneville Elementary School
- Nessacus Regional Middle School
- Wahconah Regional High School

Three Representatives At Large From District Support/Specialist Staff

Three Representatives At Large From Paraprofessional Staff

CURRENTLY SERVING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

(Regular Members, Spring 2005)

Brenda Arbib, Berkshire Trail	Deb Bevan, Nessacus	Teresa Bills, Craneville
Bruce Collina, Craneville	Tom Callahan, Wahconah	Elaine Dindio, Nessacus
Andrew Garcia, Nessacus	Tracey Goodrich, Nessacus	Estelle Graziola, Nessacus
Jan Miller, Nessacus	Stephanie Morris, Craneville	Karen O'Brien, Wahconah
Jim Stankiewicz, A. Supt.	June Waldman, Psychologist	Deb White, Nessacus

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The committee members that served throughout the school year are strongly encouraged to continue their membership into next year. We are in need of broader representation, and an early goal of the committee will be to see members present from every school.

This document, will serve as the foundation of next year's professional development efforts and activities. We will revisit and revise this plan as necessary to reflect our ever-evolving individual, school, and district goals. Meetings will be scheduled at least every other month beginning in September. Please consider getting involved.

UPDATED: JUNE 1, 2006

Appendix A: Specific Contractual Language Pertaining to Professional Development

Teacher's Contract:

ARTICLE 8 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 The District shall conduct or cause to be conducted at least one conference, seminar, lecture, workshop or similar program (hereinafter referred to as "inservice program") per work year for the purpose of engendering and fostering the professional improvement of the teacher. The entire cost of such inservice program shall be borne by the District. Professional development courses will be designed and from time to time revised to meet the professional development needs of the District and the curriculum frameworks and other skills required to implement the Massachusetts Department of Education Statewide Plan for Professional Development, the Central Berkshire Regional School District Plan for Professional Development including individual school plans and the individual staff members professional development plan.
- 8.1.1 Notwithstanding any provisions in 8.1, teacher attendance at such inservice programs shall be mandatory if the District so designates, provided always that if such inservice program is designed attendance mandatory, such program shall be held on a work day.
- 8.2 The District will pay the reasonable cost and expenses, including fees, meals, lodging and transportation for workshops, seminars, conferences and other professional sessions. Unit members shall submit requests for approval to the Superintendent or his designee. In granting requests under this paragraph, the Superintendent or his designee shall give preference to unit members making a first request. Unit members who seek approval for a second or subsequent workshop, seminar, conference and other professional session, during any work year, must submit such requests to the Superintendent or his designee. The decision of the Superintendent or his designee shall be final and shall not be subject to the provisions of Article 4. Approved requests pursuant to this paragraph shall not exceed, during any fiscal year, the identifiable funds in the budget allocated for workshops, seminars, conferences and other professional sessions, unless additional funds are made available through grants.
- 8.3.1 The District shall conduct or cause to be conducted on the District's premises at least two courses of study having at least one examination or the equivalent thereof and a term paper, at any time during the calendar year, provided no such course of study shall be held for fewer than 10 enrollees. Upon a teacher's successful completion of each such course of study, the District will (provide written verification of clock hours for his use toward Massachusetts recertification requirements and) will award to such teacher "approved academic credits" in the amount designated in writing by the Superintendent at the time teacher enrolled into the said course of study. The course of study which the District is required to conduct or cause to be conducted shall be equivalent to a three-semester-hour course. The District may but need not offer these courses in accordance with the requirements of the Education Reform Act, as they relate to Professional Development and recertification.
- 8.3.2 Teacher participation in courses of study mentioned in this subparagraph 8.3.1 shall be voluntary and the cost of tuition shall be borne by the District.
- 8.3.3 During the term of this agreement, a unit member shall be allowed one college course per year at the District's expense. The District agrees to reimburse a unit member up to a maximum of \$400 in each fiscal year of this contract, so long as the member receives a minimum of 3.0 in said course, for tuition, fees and books. A unit member shall submit a written request for reimbursement with evidence of payment to the District within the fiscal year in which the course was completed. A unit member seeking to take a course during the summer must advise, in writing, the Superintendent or his designee by no later than June 15. Reimbursement shall be paid in the order the taking of a course was approved pursuant to Section 5.7 by the Superintendent, up to an aggregate maximum for all unit members of \$48,000 per fiscal year and the remainder, if any shall not be reimbursed.
- 8.4 The Association and the District shall encourage teachers to participate in committees formed to design professional development programs, inservice programs and course of study programs for individuals, for particular schools and for the District.

Paraprofessional Contract:

ARTICLE 3 - SALARIES AND BENEFITS

A-1

PATHWAYS FOR MEETING PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Paraprofessionals in possession of a high school diploma or its equivalent have the opportunity to meet the post-secondary requirements of No Child Left Behind by pursuing one of the three options, or pathways, listed below. Pathways 1 and 2 are available to incumbent and prospective paraprofessionals, while Pathway 3 is only available to incumbent paraprofessionals who are already working in a district or charter school.

Pathway 1: 48 Credit Hours of Coursework or an Associate's Degree

Incumbent and prospective paraprofessionals may satisfy the federal requirements by obtaining an Associate's (or higher) degree; or by completing at least two years of study (48 credit hours of coursework) at an institution of higher education. This coursework may be completed at an institution of higher education (IHE), or in a district program offered locally in conjunction with an IHE and/or through an educational collaborative working in conjunction with an IHE.

Pathway 2: Formal Standardized Assessment

The Massachusetts Department of Education has selected both the ParaPro Assessment and the WorkKeys Certificate of Proficiency for Teacher Assistants as the formal state-endorsed assessments. These assessments will enable paraprofessionals to meet the NCLB qualification requirements.

Pathway 3: Formal Local Assessment

Incumbent paraprofessionals hired on or before January 8, 2002 may also participate in a formal, locally sponsored assessment. To this end, the Department has developed learning guidelines for paraprofessionals in the areas of literacy, numeracy and instruction. These guidelines describe the essential skills and competencies paraprofessionals need to assist classroom teachers working in Title I school-wide or targeted assistance programs. The guidelines will assist districts and charter schools in developing local assessment programs that will formally document and confirm each paraprofessional's ability to work with students receiving Title I services.

1. In accordance with the provisions of Article 8, a unit member may apply 45 PDP's or 90 PDP's once during the term of the agreement to increase his/her hourly rate. If a paraprofessional did not accumulate 45 PDP's during the 2001 – 2004 agreement, his/her PDP's will carry over to the 2004 – 2007 agreement. They will be able to accumulate their 45 PDP's or 90 PDP's in order to increase their hourly rate by 5%. If a paraprofessional did accumulate 45 PDP's or 90 PDP's during the 2001 - 2004 agreement and took advantage of the 5% increase, he/she may not carry any excess PDP's/PTP's to the 2004 – 2007 agreement in order to increase their hourly rate by 3%.
2. Longevity: As recognition for their service to the District, employees working 20 or more hours per week shall receive a longevity payment in addition to their salaries according to the following schedule:

For every five (5) years of service, employees shall receive \$200.00 to a maximum of \$1,000 (25 years service).

This will be paid after an employee attains the 5, 10, 15, 20, or 25 year anniversary in the final pay period of the fiscal year as a lump sum, not as part of the base. Employees who retire prior to the end of the fiscal year shall be eligible for this payment. The first payment will be made in June 2005.

3. The District shall offer and maintain, at no cost to unit members, The ParaEducator's Network or shall employ some other web-based professional development provider as one of the paths by which a unit member may become qualified pursuant to ESEA, 2001, 20 USC 6301 et. Seq. Also, to the extent that the Massachusetts Department of Education provides and endorses the Massachusetts Service on-line ParaPro Assessment, the District shall be a host site for the educational testing and shall assume the cost of a unit member taking the State assessment test to become *highly* qualified. In the event a unit member does not attain a passing score on the assessment test the first time, the cost of taking said test on subsequent occasions will be borne by the paraprofessional. In addition to the aforementioned paths to becoming *highly* qualified, a unit member shall, pursuant to ESEA, 2001, 20 USC 6301 et. seq., automatically be *highly* qualified upon attaining an Associate's Degree or *by completing at least two years of study (48 credit hours of coursework) at an institution of higher education.*

If a unit member has been determined by another district or by the Massachusetts Department of Education as having met the requirements of 20 USC 6301 et. seq., he/she shall be considered to have met the requirements by the District.

Paraprofessionals who meet qualification standards under ESEA, 2001, 20 USC 6301 et. seq., shall upon meeting said standards automatically receive a 3% per hour increase.

ARTICLE 8 - PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT
(Paraprofessional Contract continued)

- A. The Committee shall conduct or cause to be conducted at least one inservice type conference, seminar, lecture, workshop or similar program (hereinafter referred to as "Inservice Program") when schools are not in session for the purpose of engendering and fostering improvement in the work skills of paraprofessionals. To the extent that the yearly school calendar allows, this (or these) days shall coincide with the teachers' in-service days scheduled before the regular start of the school year. The Committee's cost of such inservice programs, including fees, tuition and books, shall be borne by the Committee. A Committee of at least three paraprofessionals will work with the Assistant Superintendent in order to plan for this inservice day.
- B. Paraprofessional attendance at this inservice program shall be mandatory only if paraprofessionals are paid their hourly rate for the time in attendance at this inservice program. Allowable reasons for absences are specified in Article 3, Section B.A. Request to be absent without pay will not be honored at the outset of the school year. There shall be two (2) paid in-service days or conference days during the school year. As specified in "A" above, these two days will coincide with the two regularly scheduled teacher in-service days that are held prior to the start of the school year. Any additional professional development workshops, activities, conferences, or courses shall be at the discretion of the principal or immediate supervisor.
- C. Professional Development Points (PDPs) may be applied toward an incentive as shown in Article 3. When a paraprofessional qualifies for a PDP increment between September 15 and March 1, the effective date of the movement shall be March 1. When a paraprofessional qualifies for a PDP increment between March 1 and September 15, the effective date of the movement shall be September 1. PDPs to be applied toward the incentive must be approved by the Superintendent, or his designee, prior to starting work toward the PDPs. The incentive is only available to paraprofessionals in accordance with Article 3.