

PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Generally

The Maggie L. Walker Governor's School Regional Board provides a program of high-quality professional development:

- in the use and documentation of performance standards and evaluation criteria based on student academic progress and skills for teachers and administrators to clarify roles and performance expectations and to facilitate the successful implementation of instructional programs that promote student achievement at the school and classroom levels;
- as part of the license renewal process, to assist teachers and administrators in acquiring the skills needed to work with gifted students, students with disabilities, and students who have been identified as having limited English proficiency and to increase student achievement and expand the knowledge and skills students require to meet the standards for academic performance set by the Board of Education;
- in educational technology for all instructional personnel which is designed to facilitate integration of computer skills and related technology into the curricula;
- for administrative personnel designed to increase proficiency in instructional leadership and management, including training in the evaluation and documentation of teacher and administrator performance based on student academic progress and the skills and knowledge of such instructional or administrative personnel; and
- designed to educate School Board employees about bullying as defined in Va. Code § 22.1-276.01 and the need to create a bully-free environment.

Teachers and Administrators

In addition, the Regional School Board provides teachers and administrators with high-quality professional development programs each year in

- instructional content;
- the preparation of tests and other assessment measures;
- methods for assessing the progress of individual students, including Standards of Learning assessment materials or other criterion-referenced tests that match locally developed objectives;
- instruction and remediation techniques in English, mathematics, science and history and social science;
- interpreting test data for instructional purposes;
- technology applications to implement the Standards of Learning; and
- effective classroom management.

Requirements

All instructional personnel are required to participate each year in professional development programs.

No secondary school teacher is required to participate more frequently than once within six months of employment with the Regional School Board and once every five years thereafter in any non-academic training activity, as defined in Va. Code § 22.1-298.8(A). Except that participation in additional training relating to secure mandatory test violations as set forth in Va. Code §§ 22.1-19.1 and 22.1-292.1 may be required as determined by the Regional School Board or executive director if it is determined that such additional training is necessary to comply with federal or state law or to remediate misconduct. Each teacher who completes such training must sign a written attestation that the teacher has been trained in and understands the relevant subject matter.

The total frequency and duration of non-academic training activities in which each public secondary school teacher is required to participate pursuant to (i) state law or regulation or (ii) policy or regulation of the Regional School Board shall not exceed 25 hours every five years. Any non-academic training a teacher voluntarily participates in does not count toward this maximum number of hours. The provisions of Va. Code § 22.1-298.8(B) do not apply to any non-academic training activity or other training activity in which any public-school teacher is required to participate pursuant to federal law or regulation.

Science-Based Reading Research and Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

Teachers and administrators, as required by law, must complete high-quality professional development and training in science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction in accordance with applicable guidance from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

Virginia Individual Education Program (IEP) Implementation Training

Beginning no later than the 2027-2028 school year, the Regional School Board provides high-quality professional development in implementing the Virginia IEP established pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-214.4(11) and the referral, evaluation, reevaluation, and eligibility forms and worksheets referenced in Va. Code §22.1-214.4(6), for applicable instructional personnel as required by law.

Beginning no later than the 2027-2028 school year, the Regional School Board will provide high-quality professional development in instructional practices to support specially designed instruction in inclusive settings for:

- each teacher with a provisional general education license or an endorsement in secondary education through grade 12;
- each administrator with an endorsement in administration and supervision preschool through grade 12;
- any teacher with a provisional special education license for whom the Regional School Board determines there is a need for such professional development.

Autism Spectrum Disorder Training

The Regional School Board provides high-quality professional development each year in communicating with and supporting students with autism spectrum disorder for any instructional personnel and Regional School Board employees whose duties include regular contact with students. Such training is provided in accordance with the guidance provided by the Board of Education pursuant to clause (x) of Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:5(C), that includes

- an overview of the characteristics and behavioral recognition of autism spectrum disorder,
- strategies for communicating and interacting with and supporting students with autism spectrum disorder, and
- best practices for responding to and de-escalating certain behavioral challenges and situations.

This professional development program is optional. Instructional personnel and Regional School Board employees who complete this professional development are eligible for professional development points toward renewal of the individual's license for the number of in-person hours of coursework completed.

Additionally, each Regional School Board employee who assists in the transportation of students with autism spectrum disorders on school buses must participate in any Board of Education provided training program relevant to this work.

Mental Health Awareness Training

In accordance with Virginia Code § 22.1-298.6, the Regional School Board requires each teacher and the following personnel, who are employed full-time, to complete mental health awareness training: administrators, counselors, school nurse, school social worker, security officers, librarian, coaches, club sponsors, registrar, reception, attendance officer, and the activities director.

Maggie L. Walker Governor's School will ensure such training is provided and made available.

Such training must address the needs of youth populations that are at a high risk of experiencing mental health challenges and disorders in accordance with evidence-based practices developed by the American Psychological Association, including those delineated in Virginia Code § 22.1-298.6 and any additional requirements established by the Board of Education.

Cultural Competency Training

All licensed instructional personnel issued must complete cultural competency training in accordance with guidance issued by the Board of Education.

Implementation and Review

The Regional School Board annually reviews its professional development program for quality, effectiveness, participation by instructional personnel, and relevancy to the instructional needs of teachers and the academic achievement needs of the students in the school. Such review must consider the extent to which the professional development program supports teachers in implementing the textbooks and other high-quality instructional materials adopted for school use.

Professional development programs must be aligned with guidance, technical assistance, and approved professional learning resources issued by the Virginia Department of Education.

The executive director or executive director's designee shall establish procedures for the implementation, tracking, and documentation of all training required under law and this policy.

Adopted: October 21, 1999

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Legal Refs.:

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-23.3, 22.1-253.13:5, 22.1-276.01, 22.1-291.4, 22.1-298.6, 22.1-298.7, and 22.1-298.8.