

# REGULATION GUIDE

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Professional Development for Teachers and  
School Leaders

## R 3240 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

### A. Professional Development – Definition (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.2)

1. Professional development shall be comprised of professional learning opportunities aligned with student learning and educator development needs; and school, school district, and/or State improvement goals.
2. Professional development shall have as its primary focus the improvement of teachers' and school leaders' effectiveness in assisting all students to meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS).
3. Professional development shall include the work of established collaborative teams of teachers, school leaders, and other administrative, instructional, and educational services staff members who commit to working together to accomplish common goals and who are engaged in a continuous cycle of professional improvement focused on:
  - a. Evaluating student learning needs through ongoing reviews of data on student performance; and
  - b. Defining a clear set of educator learning goals based on the rigorous analysis of these data.
4. Professional learning shall incorporate coherent, sustained, and evidenced-based strategies that improve educator effectiveness and student achievement, including job-embedded coaching or other forms of assistance to support educators' transfer of new knowledge and skills to their work.



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5. Professional development may be supported by external expert assistance or additional activities that:
  - a. Address defined student and educator learning goals;
  - b. Advance primarily ongoing school-based professional development; and
  - c. Include, but are not limited to, courses, workshops, institutes, networks, and conferences provided by for-profit and nonprofit entities outside the school such as universities, educational service agencies, technical assistance providers, networks of content specialists, and other education organizations and associations.
6. Professional development shall align with the professional standards for teachers and school leaders in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3 and the Standards for Professional Learning in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3.

B. Standards for Professional Learning (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3)

1. Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and improves results for all students shall be guided by the following standards:
  - a. Learning communities: Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment;
  - b. Leadership: Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning;
  - c. Resources: Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning;
  - d. Data: Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning;



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- e. Learning designs: Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes;
    - f. Implementation: Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change; and
    - g. Outcomes: Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.
  - 2. The standards in 1.a. through g. above shall serve as indicators to guide the policies, activities, facilitation, implementation, management, and evaluation of professional development.
- C. Requirements for Individual Teacher Professional Development Planning and Implementation (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.4)
  - 1. To meet the professional development requirement, each teacher shall be guided by an individualized Professional Development Plan (PDP), which shall include at least twenty hours per year of qualifying activities. The twenty-hour annual requirement shall be reduced by a pro rata share reflecting the use of family or medical leave.
  - 2. The content of each PDP shall be developed by each teacher's supervisor, in consultation with the teacher, and shall align with the Professional Standards for Teachers in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3 and the Standards for Professional Learning in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3.
  - 3. The PDP shall be effective for one year and shall specify, at a minimum:
    - a. One area for development of professional practice derived from the results of observations and evidence accumulated through the teacher's annual performance evaluation;
    - b. As appropriate, an additional area for development of professional practice aligned to the teacher's role as a member of his or her collaborative professional learning team in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.2;



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- c. As appropriate, an additional area for development of professional practice aligned with school and/or district improvement goals as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.5 and 15.6; and
  - d. Any requirements for professional development stipulated elsewhere in statute or regulation.
- 4. The progress of each teacher in meeting the goals of the PDP must be determined annually and aligned to the district or applicable nonpublic school process for teacher evaluation.
- 5. Progress on the PDP must be discussed during a minimum of one annual conference between the teacher and his or her supervisor.
- 6. Each teacher shall provide evidence of progress toward meeting the requirements of his or her individual PDP, and this evidence must be reviewed as part of each conference.
- 7. The PDP shall be revised at a minimum annually, but may be adjusted as necessary to support the teacher's progress.
- 8. All teachers governed by the professional development requirements shall have an individual PDP within thirty instructional days of the beginning of their respective teaching assignments.
- 9. The Board of Education shall ensure all teachers receive the necessary opportunities, support, and resources to engage in ongoing professional learning and to complete the requirements of their respective PDPs.
- 10. A teacher's individual PDP goals may necessitate more than the recommended minimum requirements outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15 et seq.
- 11. Additional hours of qualifying activities may be required for teachers in low-performing schools, as determined by the Commissioner of Education.



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D. Requirements for School-Level Professional Development Planning and Implementation (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.5)

1. The Principal shall oversee the development and implementation of a plan for school-level professional development.
2. The school-level professional development plan shall include a description of school-level and team-based professional learning aligned with identified school goals, and teacher and student learning needs.
3. The school-level plan shall become part of the district's professional development plan reviewed by the Board of Education pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.6.
4. The school-level professional development plan shall go into effect for the 2013-2014 school year.
5. The Principal shall ensure all teachers receive the necessary opportunities, support, and resources to complete professional development requirements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.4(a).

E. Requirements for District-Level Professional Development Planning and Implementation (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.6)

1. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall oversee the development and implementation of plans to address the school district's professional development needs. School districts sending to the same middle and/or high school may form a regional consortium to develop one district-wide plan based on the sending schools' plans.
2. The Superintendent shall:
  - a. Review school-level professional development plans;



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- b. Assess the learning needs of students, teachers, and school leaders based on educator evaluation data, school-level plan, and data from school- and district-level performances;
    - c. Plan, support, and implement professional development activities that address the CCCS, and that align with the Standards for Professional Learning in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3 and the Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3; and
    - d. Develop and update, as necessary, the district mentoring plan for new teachers in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:9-8.4.
  - 3. The Superintendent shall review on an annual basis the school district plan to assess its effectiveness and revise it as necessary to meet the school district's learning goals for students, teachers, and school leaders.
  - 4. The school district plan shall provide information on school-level and district-wide professional development opportunities, the resources being allocated toward their support, and a justification for the expenditures.
  - 5. The school district plan shall include any professional development required by statute or regulation.
  - 6. The Superintendent shall be responsible for the content and implementation of the district professional development plan. The Superintendent shall present the plan to the Board of Education to review for fiscal impact.
- F. Implementation of the Professional Development Requirement for School Leaders (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.7)
- 1. The Board of Education shall oversee and review for the Superintendent professional development that links to individual, school, and district professional development goals and to the school district's professional development plan.



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2. The Superintendent shall oversee and review for each Principal and Supervisor professional development that links to individual, school, and district professional development goals and the school district's professional development plan.
3. The Superintendent, Principals, and Supervisors shall fulfill the professional development requirement through the creation, implementation, and completion of a professional development plan that:
  - a. Aligns with the Professional Standards for School Leaders set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.4 and the Standards for Professional Learning in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.3;
  - b. Derives from the results of observations, evidence, and recommendations included in the annual performance evaluation of the Superintendent, Principals, or Supervisors;
  - c. Identifies professional goals that address specific individual, school, or school district goals; and
  - d. Grounds professional development activities in objectives related to improving teaching, learning, and student achievement, and in support of the school and/or school district professional development plan.
4. Each active school leader shall be required to provide evidence of progress toward fulfillment of his or her plan. Evidence shall include:
  - a. A narrative account detailing plan goals and their achievement; and
  - b. Documentation of professional growth activities such as school-based learning activities, training, university coursework, action research, and study groups. Study groups may include school, district, county and/or State associations and organizations, school and district collaborative teams, and virtual learning communities.



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### Professional Development for Teachers and School Leaders

5. Leaders whose positions require a Principal or Supervisor endorsement shall have an annual plan developed in collaboration with the Superintendent or designee holding a Chief School Administrator endorsement.
6. Leaders whose positions require a Chief School Administrator's endorsement, but who do not serve as a Chief School Administrator of the school district, shall have an annual plan developed in collaboration with the Superintendent or designee holding a Chief School Administrator endorsement.
7. The Superintendent or designee holding a Chief School Administrator endorsement shall meet with Principals, Supervisors, or other school administrators at mid-year to assess progress toward completion or modification of the plan.
8. The Superintendent or designee holding a Chief School Administrator endorsement shall review the status of the professional development plan as part of the Principals', Supervisors', or other district administrators' annual performance evaluation.
9. The Superintendent shall develop a professional development plan for review by the Board of Education.
10. The Superintendent shall provide to the Board of Education annual evidence of progress toward completion of the professional development plan and summative evidence of plan completion every three to five years, depending on the Superintendent's contract with the Board of Education.
11. In cases where there is disagreement between the Superintendent and the Board of Education regarding plan contents or progress toward completion, the Superintendent may appeal to the Executive County Superintendent, who will have final decision-making authority on all such matters.





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G. Requirements for School Leader Professional Development in Ethics, Law, and Governance (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.8)

1. All professional development plans for active school leaders serving on a permanent or interim basis whose positions require possession of a Chief School Administrator, Principal, or Supervisor endorsement in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:9-12.3 shall ensure the completion of appropriate training on: school law, ethics, and governance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:26-8.2; and other statutory requirements related to student safety and well-being. To meet this ongoing requirement, the specific training needs of each school leader will be reviewed annually as part of the professional development planning process.

H. Monitoring and Assistance (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.9)

1. The Board of Education shall monitor and enforce the professional development requirements for teachers and school leaders set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15 et seq.
2. The Board of Education shall actively assist and support the provision of opportunities and resources, and the efforts by teachers and school leaders to meet the professional development requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.1 et seq.
3. To ensure that the professional development requirements set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15 et seq. reflect a policy of continuous improvement, constructive support, and timely intervention, the Department of Education shall establish accountability procedures pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:30.
4. It is the responsibility of supervisors and school district administrators through the teacher performance evaluation process and the professional development planning process to monitor each teacher's progress in meeting the professional development requirements and to take appropriate steps to assure such progress. In any instance where a teacher's progress is found to be inadequate, the school district administration shall take appropriate remedial action by applying sound and accepted principles of progressive supervision and other appropriate means.



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5. It is the responsibility of a school leader's immediate supervisor, or the Board of Education in the case of the Superintendent, to monitor each school leader's progress in meeting the professional development requirements. Monitoring shall be accomplished through the performance evaluation and professional development planning processes. In any instance where a school leader's progress is found to be inadequate, the school leader's immediate supervisor or Board of Education shall take appropriate remedial action.
6. The school district administration shall be responsible for maintaining accurate records of each educator's progress in meeting the professional development requirements outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15 et seq. Such records shall include a copy of each educator's current professional development plan and timeline, as well as any documentation and evidence showing the educator's progress toward meeting the plan's requirements.
7. If a teacher leaves the employ of one New Jersey school district and is hired by another, the previous employing school district must share with the new employing school district the teacher's PDP and all supporting documentation. If the current professional development plan is found to be unsuitable to the teacher's new assignment, the new employing school district must ensure a revised professional development plan and timeline are created within thirty days of hire by the employee's new supervisor in collaboration with the new teacher.
8. If a school leader leaves the employ of one New Jersey school district and is hired by another, the new employing school district or Board of Education shall ensure that a revised professional development plan appropriate to the new assignment is developed in collaboration with the school leader.

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