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**POLICY 20**  
**PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF TEACHERS**

The Board believes in the importance of ongoing professional development of its teaching staff and therefore, supports ongoing activities that will enhance the competence of its teachers as identified in the teacher's professional growth plan.

**Specifically**

1. A Professional Growth Committee will be established in accordance with the Collective Agreement to develop procedures to guide the administration of the Professional Growth Fund.
  - 1.1 The Professional Growth Committee shall meet up to a minimum of five (5) times annually.
2. The Professional Growth Fund budget will be established by the Professional Growth Committee and will be considered on a year-to-year basis only. The school year shall be defined as September 1<sup>st</sup> - August 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - 2.1 Leaves will be charged against the school year in which they are taken.
  - 2.2 Approvals for leaves that are ongoing are approved on a year-to-year basis only.
3. The Professional Growth Fund shall be maintained as a single fund in its entirety and shall be administered by the Professional Growth Committee to provide financial assistance to a maximum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) per teacher, per school year, which sum shall include any and all costs including substitute teacher coverage, tuition, registration, transportation, accommodation, and subsistence subject to the list of approved Professional Development activities of this policy.

A subsistence fee of \$35 per conference day is included within the \$2000 for use under the discretion of the applicant.

An individual's unused portion of financial assistance shall not be cumulative and/or carried over from one school year to the next.

- 3.1 Approval for Conferences/Workshops is obtained by the Principal and Zone Representative. All other leaves are approved by the Professional Growth Committee.

- 3.2 Budget reports will be submitted to the Zone Representative by the Superintendent or designate.
  - 3.3 An annual budget report shall be submitted by the Professional Growth Committee to Evergreen Local #11.
4. For the purposes of this policy, teaching staff shall include all teachers under contract to the Grande Yellowhead Public School Division, and all substitute teachers who have taught in the Grande Yellowhead Public School Division for at least twenty-five (25) days during the school year, with the exception of teachers on secondment or unpaid leaves.
5. Teachers are responsible for their own professional development. Such professional development must be beneficial to the teacher, the students and the school/system. Therefore, the financial support provided by the Professional Growth Fund is intended to cover a portion of the cost of the professional development activity.
  - 5.1 All forms for Professional Growth activities shall be made available through the Grande Yellowhead Public School Division website. Only forms taken from the Grande Yellowhead Public School Division website shall be used.
  - 5.2 In the event that any Professional Growth leave is approved and not taken, it is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the Zone Representative within five (5) days of date of approved leave.
  - 5.3 As per administrative directive, P-Cards are not to be used for Professional Growth activities.
6. All activities funded by the Professional Growth Fund must be aligned with the teacher's Professional Growth Plan.
  - 6.1 Applications for all Professional Growth activities require the Principal's or designate signature, or in the case of a Principal, the signature of the Superintendent or designate. This signature shall indicate that suitable coverage can be arranged for the teaching assignment, and that the activity reflects the teacher's Professional Growth Plan.
  - 6.2 Professional growth activities should be initiated by the teacher.
7. All leaves require prior approval. Application must be received by zone rep a minimum of two (2) weeks prior. All claims must be submitted to [atapg@gypsd.ca](mailto:atapg@gypsd.ca).
  - 7.1 All expense claims shall be submitted to the Superintendent or designate after attendance at the professional growth activity and must be received within thirty (30) days of returning from the activity or in the case of summer leaves, within fifteen (15) days of school opening.
    - 7.1.1 Claims that are received after the 30 day deadline will be paid at the rate of fifty percent (50%) of the claim if received within an additional 30 day grace period.

- 7.1.2 If a claim form is not submitted within 60 days, substitute costs will be deducted from the teacher.
- 7.1.3 Claims received more than 60 days after returning from the activity will not be approved.

8. The Zone Representative shall consider the following non-credit leaves: Conference/Workshop Leaves, Inter-visitations and ATA Short Term Exchanges.

8.1 Conference/Workshop

- 8.1.1 Deadline for application – minimum of two (2) weeks prior to conference/workshop.
- 8.1.2 Approval by Zone Representative.
- 8.1.3 Financial assistance shall be provided for Conference/Workshop Leaves in accordance with paragraph 3, as follows:
  - 8.1.3.1 Overnight accommodation, receipt must be attached. An allowance of \$30.00 per night will be paid for the use of private accommodation (no receipt required).
  - 8.1.3.2 Registration fee, receipt must be attached
  - 8.1.3.3 Travel at the following rates:
    - ATA rates of \$0.53 per kilometer.
    - And if applicable, airfare, trip cancellation insurance and standard baggage fee (1 bag), and parking with receipts.
  - 8.1.3.4 Subsistence allowance of \$35 per conference day applied.
  - 8.1.3.5 Three days substitute costs.
  - 8.1.3.6 Upon request, one-half day substitute coverage shall be provided to allow for travel to attend a conference at a distance in excess of 300 kilometers or an additional full day may be granted to enable travel to a conference that is at a location in excess of 600 kilometers.

In the event that a conference falls on a Saturday and Sunday, then two days substitute coverage shall be granted for travel to a location in excess of 600 kilometers.
  - 8.1.3.7 In the case of substitute teachers, claims for financial assistance shall be submitted upon the accumulation of 25 substitute teaching days.

## 8.2 Inter-visitation

- 8.2.1 An inter-visitation is defined as an opportunity to visit a classroom teacher interacting with their students to observe and discuss best practices. An inter-visitation shall not include individual student program planning, formal in-servicing, or attending a workshop, conference or course.

Inter-visitation leaves, in accordance with paragraph 3, may be granted to any teacher who wishes to visit other classrooms, within Grande Yellowhead Public School Division. The Grande Yellowhead Public School Division teacher being visited is eligible for up to 0.5 per day release time to collaborate with the visiting teacher at the time of the inter-visitation. All release costs are to be charged to the leave account of the teacher requesting the leave in accordance with paragraph 3.

- 8.2.2. Approval for the location and purpose of inter-visitations shall be made through email with the Superintendent or designate. A copy of the email approval must be attached to the application. Where no suitable programs for inter-visitation exist within Grande Yellowhead Public School Division, approval of a location outside of the Division may be granted upon recommendation by the Superintendent or designate.

- 8.2.3 Deadline for application to Zone Representative (including location approval by the Superintendent or designate) is minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the visitation.

- 8.2.4 Approval by Zone Representative.

- 8.2.5 Financial assistance for inter-visitations shall be reimbursed in accordance with paragraph 3.

8.2.5.1 Claim forms must be submitted for all inter-visitation leaves, even if there are no expenses payable to the teacher.

8.2.5.2 If a claim form is not submitted within 60 days, substitute costs will be deducted from the teacher.

## 8.3 ATA Short Term Exchanges

- 8.3.1 An ATA Short Term Exchange is defined as an opportunity to job shadow for one or two weeks. You are billeted by your exchange counterpart and work-shadow in your exchange partner's school. You then host your counterpart for one or two weeks so they can experience the Alberta education system. You arrange cultural visits to correspond with the interests of both parties. You exchange during the summer months and you typically host your counterpart in September or October.

- 8.3.2 Approval for the location and purpose of the ATA Short Term Exchange shall be made through e-mail with the Superintendent or designate. A copy of the email approval must be attached to the application.
- 8.3.3 Deadline for application to Zone Representative (including approval by the Superintendent or designate) is minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the exchange.
- 8.3.4 Approval by Zone Representative.
- 8.3.5 Financial assistance for ATA Short Term Exchange shall be reimbursed in accordance with paragraph 3.
  - 8.3.5.1 Claim forms must be submitted for all ATA Short Term Exchange leaves.
  - 8.3.5.2 If a claim form is not submitted within 60 days, substitute costs will be deducted from the teacher.

9. Beginning Teachers Conference

- 9.1 Teachers new to the profession are eligible to access substitute coverage to attend the ATA Beginning Teachers Conference. Applications are to be submitted on the Conference/Workshop Leave Application form and are to be submitted for substitute coverage only. All Conference/Workshop application and claim deadlines apply.
- 9.2 Expenses for this conference shall be submitted to the ATA #11 Evergreen Local Treasurer within 30 days upon attendance of the Beginning Teachers' Conference.
- 9.3 In addition, beginning teachers may also access non-credit leaves that apply to other GYPSD teachers.

10. The Professional Growth Committee will consider Non-Credit Courses, and Category I, II, Credit Leaves in accordance with paragraph 3.

10.1 Non-Credit Course

- 10.1.1 Financial support may be granted in accordance with paragraph 3.
- 10.1.2 A course focuses on a single topic. An application proposal must be submitted and include the following information:
  - Commencement and Completion of Leave
  - Detailed description of course
  - Benefit to Student Learning
  - Applicability to Current/Future Assignments

10.1.3 Deadline – submitted minimum of two (2) weeks prior to course.

10.1.4 Approval by Professional Growth Committee.

## 10.2 Credit Leaves

Credit Leaves are identified undergraduate or graduate level coursework or equivalent and are in categories as follows:

10.2.1 Credit Leave I A credit leave, with no release.

10.2.2 Credit Leave II A credit leave with a maximum release time of four (4) days.

10.3 Application deadlines: Credit leave applications shall be received by the Zone Representative a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to commencement of leave.

## 10.4 Approval

10.4.1 Approval for all credit leaves shall be given by the Professional Growth Committee, based on information provided with the proposal application and which meets and includes the following criteria:

- Commencement and Completion of Leave
- Detailed description of course(s) and/or program(s)
- Benefit to Student Learning
- Applicability to Current/Future Assignments

## 10.5 Financial Assistance

10.5.1 Financial assistance shall be provided in accordance with paragraph 3.

## 11. School/Area Projects

The Professional Growth Committee will consider alternate proposals for ongoing projects such as research projects, study groups, professional learning communities, mentorship, action research, peer support, etc. that will meet the professional growth needs of teachers. Alternate projects shall not include costs for attendance at a conference.

11.1 A school project is a professional growth activity developed for the staff of a school. Other teachers may be invited to participate.

11.2 An area project is a professional growth activity that focuses on a topic of interest to teachers from several schools.

11.3 Each school and each teacher shall be entitled to only one school/area project and teachers in a subject/interest area can apply for an area project in addition to the school project.

- 11.4 The project must be teacher initiated and offer benefits to an identified group of teachers.
- 11.5 Applications for School/Area Projects shall include a proposal to include at least the following:
- Type of Project (Area or School)
  - Name of Project
  - Participants and their schools
  - Dates
  - Detailed description of project including:
    - How the project is aligned with divisional goals
    - Interest and applicability to teachers
    - Anticipated learning outcomes
    - Benefit to student learning
  - Detailed Budget
- 11.6 Funding approved by the Professional Growth Committee will be allocated for the following purpose:
- 11.6.1 The expenses and cost of speakers, meals.
- 11.6.2 The cost of consumable materials for use in the project.
- 11.6.3 Expenses associated with organizing the project.
- 11.6.4 Required media resources.
- 11.7 Deadline – four (4) weeks prior to project.
- 11.8 Approval by the Professional Growth Committee.
- 11.9 Financial assistance for School/Area Projects will be paid on the following basis:
- 11.9.1 The project will be reimbursed to a maximum of \$50 per participating teacher.
- 11.9.2 Release time/costs for participants and classroom supplies/resources will not be covered under the School/Area Project.
12. A joint committee with representation from ATA Evergreen Local 11, CUPE Local 1357, and Administration will be established for coordinating the organization of a one-day Staff Institute and will invite representation from ATA, CUPE Local 1357, Division Bus Drivers and Bus Contractors.
- 12.1 One day per school year must be provided for a Staff Institute.
- 12.2 The Staff Institute will be organized to advance Division priorities or areas of focus.

- 12.3 Grande Yellowhead Public School Division employee expertise shall be used as much as is practically possible for Staff Institute. Successful applicants for Professional Growth activities should be prepared to serve as a resource person.
13. Decisions of the Zone Representatives may be appealed to the Professional Growth Committee. Upon a written request, the Professional Growth Committee will reconsider applications.
- 13.1 Requests must be in written format.
- 13.2 Requests must be submitted to the ATA Professional Growth Chairperson to be brought to the Professional Growth Committee.
- 13.3 Requests must be submitted within two weeks of notification of the original application decision.
14. An applicant may appeal an ATA Professional Growth Committee decision to the Board of Trustees.

Legal Reference: Section 18, 20, 60, 61, School Act  
Collective Agreement

Developed: November 2005  
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