

**Columbia Public Schools**  
**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

This document is intended to clarify guidelines regarding who is eligible for in-service credit, the rate credit will be documented, what activities are eligible for professional development credit and when in-service credit or payment is applicable for professional growth activities.

The purpose of professional development in Columbia Public Schools is to maximize the knowledge and skills of the professional engaged in the teaching and learning process in order to enhance student learning, improve instruction and increase student achievement. Since professional development is key to improving teachers' instruction and students' achievement, certificated staff members who participate in quality professional growth activities at the district or school-based levels may receive in-service credit for advancement on the salary schedule.

**Participant Eligibility**

- Only certificated staff members whose salary is calculated on the basis of the teachers' salary schedule may receive in-service credit.
- Non-certificated, hourly staff members and persons on administrative contract are not eligible for in-service credit.
- Certificated staff members on district approved leaves-of-absence may accumulate in-service credit with prior approval from the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. This approval must be obtained before any in-service credit is requested. No in-service credit will be given if approval is obtained after the professional development.
- Only CPS approved in-service credit hours can be used towards movement on the CPS salary schedule and professional development hours from previous district(s) are not applicable for use on the CPS salary schedule.

**Calculation of In-Service Credit**

- One (1) in-service credit will be granted for advancement on the salary schedule for each sixteen (16) hours of participation in approved in-services.
- The minimum contact time which may be earned for a given staff development activity is one (1) hour; thereafter, contact hours may accumulate in half-hour increments after the first required hour.
- In-service credit will be given for sessions ending fifteen minutes prior to start time and for sessions starting fifteen minutes after dismissal time.

**Activities and Responsibilities**

- The Director of School Improvement will approve all staff development requests for in-service credit at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the professional development activity.

- District-wide and building-based professional growth activities conducted outside of the regularly school day and approved in advance through the Office of School Improvement will be eligible for in-service credit.
- Building level staff development programs which are designed to meet specific instructional improvement objectives, scheduled outside the regular school day, and approved prior to the date of the proposed in-service by the Director of School Improvement will be eligible for in-service credit.
- In-service credit will only be given for building level departmental collaborations or for serving on committees if the entire purpose of the activity is professional learning and growth. Meetings, while necessary for the functioning of a building, are not eligible for in-service credit.
- In-service credit will only be approved for grade level or subject-area data team collaboration if the work extends beyond common planning time provided during the school-day schedule, is not lesson planning and is approved by both the Principal/Supervisor and the Director of School Improvement. No more than sixteen (16) hours of grade level or subject-area data team collaboration will be approved for in-service credit in a calendar year.
- In order for staff members to receive credit on the salary schedule for professional development offered by the Columbia School District, all participation expectations must be fulfilled, such as attendance, active participation, feedback/evaluation, and/or applicable assignments.
- When a professional development activity is offered in multiple-part sessions, it is possible that in-service credit may not be awarded unless all sessions have been completed. This is determined by the session presenter(s) and expectations are posted on the professional development proposal and calendar. It is the responsibility of participants to learn specific course expectations.
- If a staff member elects to attend a session intended for a grade-level or department outside his/her teaching assignment, in-service credit may be withheld.
- Professional-growth activities sponsored by groups, other than the Columbia School District, can be eligible for in-service credit only if the following criteria are met:
  - The staff member initiating the request must first seek approval from the appropriate district director, coordinator, supervisor or principal before consideration of approval by the Director of School Improvement.
  - The Director of School improvement must approve the activity prior to the start date.
  - The primary purpose of the activity must be to gain educational experience relevant to the participant's teaching assignment and must be aligned to school improvement goals and district CSIP objectives.
  - The activity cannot occur during contract time.
  - The recipient cannot receive college credit for the activity.
  - The recipient cannot receive a stipend or presenter's fee for this activity.
  - A timed agenda will be required to be submitted to the Office of School Improvement after attending the out of district professional development activity.

### **Non-Credit Activities**

- Unless staff development activities have been approved in advance, they are not eligible for in-service credit. The staff development activity should be approved a minimum of two weeks prior to the beginning of the professional development.

- Staff development programs or activities conducted during the regularly scheduled school day are not eligible for in-service credit. Staff development activities held during any contract day, such as during teacher work days or collaboration days are not eligible for in-service credit.
- Columbia Public Schools does not define lesson planning as professional development eligible for in-service credit.
- In-service credit will not be given for faculty meetings.
- In-service credit will not be approved for student assistance team committees.
- Staff members who accept compensation for participating in a district-sponsored activity are not eligible for in-service credit on the salary schedule for the same participation.
- Travel occurring in conjunction with the sponsorship of student groups is not eligible for in-service credit.
- In-service credit will be given only for the amount of time during professional workshop/conference schedules in which the principle activities are content presentation sessions. Credit will not be given for registration time, business meetings, breaks, exhibits, meals, social activities, etc.
- In-service credit will not be based upon Continuing Education Credits (CEUs). Through the pre-approval process, the Office of School Improvement will determine if the CEUs are eligible for in-service credit and if the activity should be converted to in-service hours based upon a timed agenda. Advertisement of CEUs by an outside organization is not a guarantee CPS will approve the professional development for in-service credit. CEU certificates will not be approved for in-service credit after the professional development took place.
- Online courses, webinars or seminars are not eligible for in-service credit except in cases that the online course is completed under the direct supervision of a supervisor. Approval by the Office of School Improvement must be gained by the supervisor in these cases prior to the beginning of the professional development. Certificates of completion from online courses will not be accepted as documentation of completion of online courses, webinars or seminars in order to receive in-service credit.
- In-service credit will not be given for activities which could be primarily characterized as self-improvement activities.
- When planned staff development offerings are cancelled for any reason (e.g., low enrollment or inclement weather), no in-service credit will be given.
- Auditing of a graduate course or taking a graduate course for no grade is not eligible for in-service credit. Graduate courses should be taken for a grade at an accredited college or university. The graduate course should be transcribed on an official college or university transcript.
- When a staff member has earned college credit for a course or activity and submits a transcript of this credit to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources requesting to advance on the salary schedule, the staff member is not entitled to district in-service credit for this course or activity.

### **Guidelines for Pay or In-service Credit**

In specialized circumstances where paid professional development has been approved through the district's budget process and is required as a component of a district initiative, teachers may earn \$27 per hour for their participation. For these same approved district-level initiative professional developments, facilitators may earn double in-service credit or a stipend of \$35 per hour. The double in-service credit or \$35 an hour payment is only eligible for the duration of the in-service and is to comprise both the planning and

presentation of the in-service session. Facilitators at these district-level preapproved in-services may earn presenter pay in lieu of in-service credit if they choose, even if the session is not eligible for participant pay. Facilitators of building-level in-services are only eligible to earn in-service credit and not double in-service credit. The Director of School Improvement will process all requests for credit and pay. Supervisor staff are not eligible for payment as a presenter of professional development. The following information will guide the determination.

Professional development associated with a district initiative or that is involved in producing a district curricular product may be eligible for payment at \$27 per hour. Generally, a district initiative will be considered a situation in which all teachers in the assigned program or certification area must participate and reassignment to another teaching responsibility is not possible. Examples:

- Professional development required for a new curricular area or program
- Professional development required for a district-wide pedagogy shift
- Curriculum or assessment-writing
- Professional development required as a part of a grant program

Examples of professional development eligible for in-service credit only:

- PD associated with the implementation of revised curriculum resources
- PD that supports current curriculum implementation
- PD that improves pedagogical knowledge and elevates instructional practice
- PD necessary for new teachers

### **Program Development and Implementation Responsibilities**

- District-wide in-service programs will be designed to meet district, Principal PLT, and school improvement objectives and must be approved through the Office of School Improvement. District directors, coordinators, supervisors and department chairpersons shall develop and submit proposals to the Director of School Improvement in advance of any activity. Teachers who wish to present district-level in-services must submit in-service proposals to their respective academic area coordinators prior to scheduled events. Approved in-services will be posted on the district's online calendar.
- District staff members who facilitate staff development sessions will be responsible for session implementation and for submitting attendance and evaluation records to the Office of School Improvement immediately following the completion of the session or series of sessions.
- Building-level in-services which are designed to meet specific school improvement goals and are approved and implemented through the district's Office of School Improvement, and are scheduled outside the regular school day, may be eligible for in-service credit;
  - Building principals will develop in-service proposals which reflect district and building objectives and will submit proposals in PDExpress to the Director of School Improvement prior to the date of the proposed in-service.
  - When approval has been received, building principals or their designees will administer building-level professional development sessions. The principal's responsibilities will include disseminating in-service programming information, obtaining attendance and evaluation records, and submitting this information to the Office of School Improvement.

## Record-Keeping and Reporting of Credit Earned

- Staff can access in-service credit transcripts in PDExpress, an online professional development system, managed by the Office of School Improvement.
- Individuals who wish to advance on the salary schedule on the basis of in-service credit must complete and return a **Salary Classification Change Request** form to the Office of Human Resources by **October 15th** of each school year. In-service credit hours must be completed before the beginning of the new contract year.

## Credit for Educational Travel

Board of Education Policy GCL stipulates that staff members who travel for the primary purpose of gaining experience relevant to their work may earn up to three credits for each approved travel experience. A maximum of eight credits may be earned during any five year period; a total of sixteen credits may be given during a staff member's tenure career with the Columbia Public School District.

Board policies pertaining to educational travel related to a teacher's educational assignment allow for in-service credit to be awarded at the rate of 16 in-service hours per week (the equivalent of one college credit) in specific, pre-approved situations. Advance approval from the appropriate curriculum coordinator and the Director of School Improvement is required and specific forms and documentation must be submitted in order to be eligible to receive these in-service credit hours. In addition, all travel activities to be considered for in-service credit must meet the following conditions:

- The primary purpose of the travel must be to gain educational experience relevant to the teaching assignment.
- The travel must cover at least a three-week period when the participant is not under contract.
- The participant cannot receive college credit or compensation for this travel.
- A maximum of 16 total credits may be earned during a person's career at CPS (with only 8 of these credits occurring in any five year period.)

**Domestic and Foreign Travel:** Domestic travel is defined as travel within the United States of America but outside the State of Missouri. Domestic and foreign travel shall be recognized for credit providing the regular qualifications are met.

Special projects which require the State of Missouri for their locale may be considered for credit.

Application to receive in-service credit for educational travel should be sent to the Director of School Improvement.