The Cleveland County Board of Education (the “Board”) believes a strong relationship exists between the quality of education provided to students and the competency and training of all personnel employed by the school system. The Board places a high priority on securing the most competent personnel available and, once they are employed, providing them with opportunities for professional growth and development throughout their careers. The goal of professional and staff development programs and opportunities for licensed professional employees and support staff is to improve the instructional program and create a safe learning environment for all students by improving and expanding the skills of the professional staff and support personnel.

New employees shall be provided appropriate orientation to Board policies and system-wide, school-based, and departmental procedures. However, employees are ultimately responsible for understanding and complying with the policies and procedures.

A. PROFESSIONAL AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Superintendent shall provide ongoing development opportunities for licensed and support staff and shall require participation by such personnel as appropriate. The principal shall seek input from school personnel when planning professional and staff development programs for his or her school. Teachers shall be given an opportunity to participate in in-service programs. Renewal credit will be granted in accordance with state regulations.

Professional and staff development must be provided, at the system or school level, on the effective delivery of the required curriculum. In addition, the Superintendent shall plan and provide a program of technology-related professional development to prepare the instructional staff to integrate technology into the student learning process and to address other relevant issues related to the use of digital tools and resources in the instructional program.

B. SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Licensed employees are expected to engage in self-directed activities to improve their professional skills. These employees are encouraged to seek information and training through professional development programs as well as other opportunities in order to meet this responsibility. Licensed employees are responsible to inform the Superintendent or designee of any completed training which may be credited to a licensure renewal requirement.

C. PLANS FOR GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT

Supervisors and principals also may require licensed employees to enter into plans, including mandatory improvement plans established by state law and individual, monitored and/or directed growth plans established by the State Board of Education, for professional growth and improving performance. A performance improvement plan
could involve participation in a professional development program or encompass a variety of strategies that are related to professional growth or improving performance.

D. **PAYMENT OF COSTS**

The school system will consider paying reasonable costs, within budget limits, for any courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service training sessions, or other sessions an employee is required to attend by the local administration. The employee must seek prior approval for payments.

The school system will not bear the responsibility of the cost of training taken solely for the purposes of licensure renewal.


Adopted: January 10, 2017

Replaces: Board Policy 5355, Professional Development Opportunities