

**COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL
DISTRICT 99
APPRAISAL PROCEDURES**

Revised August 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Induction and Purpose..... | 1 |
| Appraisal of New Staff..... | 2 |
| Induction of New Staff..... | 3 |
| Induction Procedures (non tenured, full time staff)..... | 6 |
| New Teacher Appraisal Schedules..... | 10 |
| Ratings..... | 13 |
| Appraisal of Staff Receiving Excellent/Satisfactory Rating..... | 14 |
| Professional Growth Plans..... | 15 |
| Professional Growth Plan worksheet..... | 17 |
| Formats for Professional Growth Projects..... | 18 |
| Professional Growth Plan with Assistance..... | 26 |
| Appraisal of Staff Receiving Unsatisfactory Rating..... | 27 |
| Appraisal of Part Time Staff..... | 28 |
| Miscellaneous Appraisal Information..... | 29 |
| Appendix –Forms..... | 30 |

COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 99 APPRAISAL PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The Appraisal Committee, consisting of certified staff members, Department Chairs, and Administrators has developed the system for appraisal in District 99. The plan set forth in this document is the result of discussion focused on developing a plan meaningful to certified staff members and administrators to address the needs of a faculty with varying years of experience and levels of expertise.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Appraisal Plan is as follows:

- To recognize, support, and reinforce effective teaching,
- To promote individual growth by adhering to the District 99 Standards of Professional Practice, which include:
 - A. Planning and Preparation
 - B. The Classroom Environment
 - C. Instruction
 - D. Professional Responsibilities
- To provide a basis for employment and retention decisions,
- To comply with provisions of Section 24A of The School Code of Illinois.

APPRAISAL OF NEW STAFF

The purpose of the Appraisal of new staff is as follows:

- To transmit the culture and values of District 99 to new educators
- To facilitate and promote professional development of the beginning educator in District 99
- To assure understanding of expectations for successful performance as an educator in District 99
- To support the needs of the beginning educator in District 99

The foundation for performance in District 99 is vested within the competencies expressed in the **District 99 Standards for Professional Practice**. Each subgroup within the certified staff has a set of Standards developed (or under development) for their respective responsibilities. These include Teacher, Librarian, Counselor, Social Worker/Psychologist, Dean, Nurse, and Student Assistance Coordinator. The Standards represent the aspects of professional performance that reflect “best practices” and that have been documented, through empirical study and/or rhetorical research, to promote improved student learning. Just as curriculum frameworks and standards define what students should know and be able to do in each of the disciplines, standards for professional practice define what professional staff should know and be able to do in the exercise of their responsibility.

The Standards offer a comprehensive framework for the complex activity of education. They should structure the conversations of educators about exemplary practice. A standard framework allows those conversations to guide novices as well as to enhance the performance of veterans.

INDUCTION OF NEW STAFF

The Induction component of the Teacher Appraisal Plan is designed for non-tenured teachers in District 99. This encompasses the first four years of full-time employment of certified staff.

The goals of the Induction Program are to:

- Facilitate the growth of the beginning teacher toward the highest levels of professional and personal development possible during the initial years of teaching.
- Help the beginning teacher acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and attitudes necessary to experience a successful career.
- Identify the needs of the beginning teacher and meet these needs through the collaborative effort of an induction team – the beginning teacher, mentor teachers and administrators.
- Transmit the culture and values of the system to beginning teachers.
- Facilitate the socialization of beginning teachers and increase the retention of promising beginners.
- Build a foundation for continued professional growth.
- Satisfy the requirements related to induction and certification by the Illinois State Board of Education.

The primary purpose of the Induction Program is to assist teachers new to District 99 in developing a clear understanding of expectations for their performance based on the **District 99 Standards for Professional Practice**. Induction also provides the necessary support to assure that all teachers have every opportunity to meet those Standards. As a result, the district lays the groundwork for establishing a common “bag of tools” utilized by all teachers. In addition, the Induction process is designed to increase accountability for decisions related to the retention and dismissal of teachers.

The Induction process is designed to offer numerous opportunities for support and feedback. New certified staff will be introduced to the **District 99 Standards for Professional Practice** early in the school year. During their employment, they will have many opportunities to discuss all the aspects of teaching with their Department Chairs, Administrators, and other colleagues. It is expected that the mentor/protégé relationship and professional growth activities offered by the district, building, or department will also provide opportunities for support and continued learning. In addition, teachers will be observed in the classroom setting both formally and informally by the Department Chair and a Designated Administrator. Professional practice that is not observable in the classroom setting will be discussed and documented through a variety of avenues.

The program is designed to develop the professional skills of the educator new to District 99 over a four year period. Specific expectations and requirements for each year are summarized in the following charts.

**DISTRICT 99 NEW TEACHER COMPREHENSIVE INDUCTION PROGRAM
(NO TEACHING EXPERIENCE OR NO PREVIOUS TENURE)**

| <u>1ST Year</u> | <u>2nd Year</u> | <u>3rd Year</u> | <u>4th Year</u> |
|---|--|--|---|
| Mentor Program | Mentor Program (optional) | | |
| District & Building Meetings (4 days) | | | |
| Professional Growth Portfolio Building Orientation (September-February) | Professional Growth Portfolio | Professional Growth Portfolio | Professional Growth Portfolio |
| Department Chair Orientation | | | |
| <u>Visit other classes</u> *1 visit (Department) * 1 visit outside Department | <u>Visit other classes</u> *1 visit (Department) *1 visit outside Department | <u>Visit other classes</u> *1 visit (Department) *1 visit outside Department | <u>Visit other classes</u> Observation(s) tied into Professional Growth Plan |

**DISTRICT 99 NEW TEACHER COMPREHENSIVE INDUCTION PROGRAM
(PREVIOUS TENURE)**

| <u>1ST Year</u> | <u>2nd Year</u> | <u>3rd Year</u> | <u>4th Year</u> |
|---|--|--|--|
| Mentor Program | Mentor Program (optional) | | |
| District & Building Meetings (4 days) | | | |
| Professional Growth Portfolio Building Orientation (September-February) | Professional Growth Portfolio | Professional Growth Portfolio | Professional Growth Portfolio |
| Department Chair Orientation | | | |
| <u>Visit other classes</u> *1 visit (Department) * 1 visit outside Department | <u>Visit other classes</u> *1 visit (Department) *1 visit outside Department | <u>Visit other classes</u> *1 visit (Department) *1 visit (Guidance/Pupil Services or Student Personnel) | <u>Visit other Classes</u> Action Research Project |

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PORTFOLIOS FOR NEW TEACHERS

(NO TEACHING EXPERIENCE OR NO PREVIOUS TENURE)

| 1 ST Year | 2 nd Year | 3 rd Year | 4 th Year |
|--|--|--|--|
| Lesson Plans (sample) Reflection exercise | Goals | Abbreviated Professional Growth Plan | Abbreviated Professional Growth Plan |
| Peer Observation reflection exercise with mentor | Initial Draft – Philosophy of Teaching | Philosophy of Teaching (draft) (revisions) | Philosophy of Teaching |
| Family Contact Log | Lesson Plan (sample) reflection exercise | Student Work (sample) | Student Work (sample) |
| Professional Growth Log | Peer Observation reflection exercise with Department Chair | Unit Plan (sample) reflection exercise | Unit Plan (sample) reflection exercise |
| Contributions to School & District Log | Family Contact Log | Peer Observation reflection exercise | Self Video reflection exercise or shadow a student for a day |
| Mentor/Protégé reflection exercise | Profession Growth Log | Family Contact Log | Family Contact Log |
| Personal Assessment | Contributions to School & District Log | Professional Growth Log | Professional Growth Log |
| | Mentor/Protégé reflection or mid-year reflection | Contributions to School & District Log | Contributions to School & District Log |
| | Personal Assessment of the year | Personal Assessment of the year | Personal Assessment of the Year |

**PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PORTFOLIOS FOR NEW TEACHERS
(PREVIOUS TENURE)**

| 1 ST Year | 2 nd Year | 3 rd Year | 4 th Year |
|--|--|--|--|
| Goals | Abbreviated Professional Growth Plan | Abbreviated Professional Growth Plan | Action Research Project (Assessment) |
| Philosophy of teaching (draft) | Philosophy of Teaching (revisions) | Family Contact Log | Self Video reflection exercise or shadow a student for a day |
| Student Work (sample) | Unit Plan (sample) reflection exercise | Professional Growth Log | Family Contact Log |
| Peer Observation reflection exercise with Department Chair | Peer Observation reflection exercise | Contributions to School & District Log | Professional Growth Log |
| Family Contact Log | Family Contact Log | Personal Assessment of the year | Contributions to School & District Log |
| Professional Growth Log | Professional growth Log | | Personal Assessment of the year |
| Contributions to School & District Log | Contributions to School & District Log | | |
| Mentor/Protégé reflection | Personal Assessment of the year | | |
| Personal Assessment of the year. | | | |

INDUCTION PROCEDURES FOR NON-TENURED FULL-TIME STAFF

A. Orientation

During the first year, staff will be oriented to procedures, practices, and operations through a series of sessions conducted by District 99 and building level administration. These will begin before school actually opens and continue at specific intervals throughout the year. A mid-September district-wide meeting for all new staff will provide an overview of the appraisal process.

B. Mentoring

Each teacher new to District 99 is assigned a certified professional as a mentor. In addition, mentors and new staff attend a day long workshop before school begins. Throughout the year additional activities and collaborative activities provide ongoing one-on-one support for the new staff by the assigned mentor.

Staff have the option of participating in the mentoring program during the second year. Specific decisions relative to this option are made in the spring of the previous year.

C. Observation – Formal and Informal

Key to feedback for the new staff member is the observation process.

1. Formal Observation

- a. Formal classroom observations include a pre-conference, the observation, and a post-conference. Formal observations are documented to the Personnel File using the Post Observation Form.
- b. Observations will be conducted by the Department Chair and the Designated Administrator.

2. Informal Contacts

- a. Conversations about teaching and short informal observations of classroom activity are necessary to support all teachers. No documentation to the file of informal contacts needs to occur. However, should such feedback be appropriate to the file, the Contact Record Form is used to document such interactions.
- b. Communication between the teacher and the observer regarding the contact should be a part of the process.

Observations, formal and informal, will be conducted according to the appropriate appraisal schedule.

Forms for the process above are located in the Appendix.

D. Professional Growth Portfolio Development

During the first four years of service, each staff member will develop a personal Professional Growth Portfolio that will document growth and development of the staff member. The Department Chair and Designated Administrator will work closely with the staff member to develop the Portfolio.

Below are the various elements of the portfolio. Each activity is assigned to a particular year based on the staff member's previous experience in the position for which hired in District 99. The descriptions are intended to serve as a guide to completing the activity.

* Abbreviated Professional Growth Plan

The staff member will develop an Abbreviated Professional Growth Plan. The Summative Appraisal from the previous year and the Self-Assessment Rubric should be considered when developing the plan.

* Goals

The staff member will develop goals for the year. These goals for action during the year will be based on the staff member and department chair's assessment of past performance and areas of focus for the current year. Goals must focus on personal professional growth in support of the school improvement plan and/or district goals.

This document is to be reviewed with the Department Chair and the Designated Administrator. The Designated Administrator will schedule a meeting in early October.

* Lesson Plan - Reflection Exercise

Each staff member shall select a lesson plan executed during the year and complete the assigned reflection activity as an assessment of its success and suggestions for improvement. This is not a lesson that was formally observed and evaluated.

* Logs

Using forms provided, staff will provide complete records of –

- a. Family Contacts (Family Contact Log)
- b. Professional Development activity and/or involvement (Personal Development Log)
- c. Contribution to the School and/or District (School/District Contribution Log)

* Mentor/Protégé Reflection/Mid-Year Reflection

Identified reflection activities completed as a part of mentor/protégé interactions should be included in the Portfolio.

Faculty not involved in the second year mentoring program should complete a mid-year reflection.

* Peer Observation – Reflection Exercise

Each staff member is expected to observe two other professionals each of the four years. These visits are to be a range of other staff depending on the staff member's assigned task. Please consult the chart for exact assigned responsibility.

The follow up reflective experience for each visit should be included in the Professional Growth Portfolio.

* Personal Assessment of the Year

This personal reflection on the first year experience is to be completed following the Summative Appraisal. The materials included will help the new staff member and his/her supervisor set goals or develop the Abbreviated Professional Growth Plan for the next year.

* Philosophy of Teaching

Staff will be asked to develop a personal "Philosophy of Teaching." It should reflect emerging beliefs and values as each individual gains knowledge and experiences and reflects carefully on each. This draft will continue to develop with appropriate updating and additions each year.

* Self Video – Reflection Exercise

The teacher will be expected to videotape himself/herself in the classroom. The follow up reflective experience should be included in the Professional Portfolio.

* Student Shadowing

The staff member, working with his/her department chair will shadow a student for a day of his/her classes. The follow reflection and insight gained should be in writing and included in the Portfolio.

* Student Work

Each staff member shall select a piece of student work and complete the reflection activity provided in the portfolio. The selected work should demonstrate teacher effectiveness.

* Unit Plan Reflection Exercise

The staff member shall select a unit plan executed during the year and complete the assigned reflection activity as an assessment of its success and suggestions for improvement.

The Portfolio should be reviewed and discussed by the staff member and his/her Department Chair a minimum of three times a year.

E. Summative Appraisal

Each year the staff member will receive a Summative Appraisal. The Summative is completed by the Department Chair and the Designated Administrator and will be reviewed with the staff member in the Summative Conference. Such conference will occur in the spring. Non-tenured teachers will not receive a rating.

The format for the Summative can be found in the Appendix.

TEACHER APPRAISAL SCHEDULES

NEW TEACHER- NO EXPERIENCE

YEAR 1

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Two (2) Formal Observations: one of which consists of two consecutive observations of the same period on two consecutive days
- Two (2) Contacts

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- Two (2) Formal Observations: one of which consists of two consecutive observations of the same period on two consecutive days
- One (1) Contact

YEAR 2

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Two (2) Formal Observations: one of which consists of two consecutive observations of the same period on two consecutive days
- Two (2) Contacts

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

YEAR 3

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

YEAR 4

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Contact

NEW TEACHER- EXPERIENCE w/ NO PREVIOUS TENURE

YEAR 1

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Two (2) Formal Observation: one of which consists of two consecutive observations of the same period on two consecutive days
- Two (2) Contacts

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Formal Observation: consisting of two consecutive days of observation of the same period
- One (1) Contact

YEAR 2

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

YEAR 3 SAME AS YEAR 2

YEAR 4

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Contact

NEW TEACHER- EXPERIENCE w/ PREVIOUS TENURE

YEAR 1

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

YEAR 2 SAME AS YEAR 1

YEAR 3

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- One (1) Formal Observation
- One (1) Contact

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Contact

YEAR 4 SAME AS YEAR 3

RATINGS

Illinois School Code requires all tenured staff to receive one of the following ratings as defined by District 99:

Excellent

Documented observations indicate effective performance behaviors in all four (4) domains of the Standard of Professional Practice. The teacher clearly understands the concepts underlying the components and implements them well. The teacher's classroom operates at a level where students are highly engaged and assume considerable responsibility for their own learning. The teacher is reflective and uses best instructional practices. He/She has an orientation and commitment to continuous professional growth.

Satisfactory

Documented observations indicate performance behavior at various levels in one or more of the domains of the Standards of Professional Practice. The teacher appears to understand the concepts underlying the components and attempts to implement its elements. The implementation is sporadic, intermittent, or otherwise not entirely successful. Additional reading, discussion, visiting classrooms of other teachers, goal setting, attention to future focus statements, and reflection may enable the teacher to achieve an 'Excellent' rating. For supervision or evaluation, this level is competent.

Unsatisfactory

Documented observations indicate ineffective performance behaviors in one or more of the domains of the Standards of Professional Practice, and require direct assistance by the assigned Building Administrator. Ineffective performance behaviors must be improved through a formal remediation plan developed pursuant to section 24A of The School Code of Illinois.

If concerns arise relative to staff member's performance during the course of the year, all discussions and reviews relative to such concerns shall be documented and appropriately filed with the Human Resources Department. Only those issues clearly communicated and documented shall be included in the summative appraisal.

The professional practice of educators encompasses more than what may be observed in the classroom. Typically, those behaviors and practices noted in Domain I and Domain IV of the District 99 Standards for Professional Practice may be best validated through gathering data in other ways. Educators may be observed in other settings (meetings, during supervisory assignments, conferences with parents, working with students outside regular class times, conducting concerts, et al). An educator may also be asked to keep logs, demonstrate reflection through writing, document professional activities, or accumulated artifacts representing an area of professional practice.

APPRAISAL OF STAFF RECEIVING AN EXCELLENT OR SATISFACTORY RATING

The District 99 Appraisal Process is founded on the following:

- District 99 Standards for Professional Practice
- Past staff member appraisals and recommendations
- Professional Growth training

TEACHER APPRAISAL SCHEDULE

DEPARTMENT CHAIR OR DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- One (1) Formal Observation a minimum of once every two years
- Professional Growth Plan is required

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLANS

The Purpose of developing a Professional Growth Plan is as follows:

- Enhance Professional Growth
- Improve Student success
- Provide feedback on new initiatives
- Focus Professional Growth on needed areas

District 99 respects the professional level of performance for those staff members who have earned tenure. Once tenure has been achieved, the appraisal process focuses on the continued personal and professional growth of the staff member as he/she continues to develop and refine personal competency with the Standards for Professional Practice. Such continued focus supports the district commitment to assuring students are provided every opportunity to achieve to their maximum potential with a well skilled and dedicated staff. The Professional Growth Plan and its execution is a crucial factor in student, teacher, school, and district success.

All tenured staff members are required to develop the Professional Growth Plan as part of the formal appraisal process and must fulfill its component expectations.

The Professional Growth Plan must be designed to further develop the professional skills of the educator as defined by the appropriate Standards for Professional Practice developed and adopted by District 99. In addition, the focus of the plan must clearly relate to the school improvement plan or the current district goals. Plans are to be developed through careful self-reflection and collaboration with the staff member's Department Chair.

Developing the Professional Growth Plan begins with reflection and self-assessment to identify areas for possible growth. The focus should come from the identification of areas in the Standards for Professional Practice which the staff member seeks to enhance or improve. The focus may also grow out of past appraisals or discussions surrounding those appraisals.

Staff members may choose to work alone, with a partner, or in a group of three or more.

The staff member(s), working with the consultation and advice of the Department Chair, will develop a proposal and the plan. It must specify activity that will assure growth in the selected component(s) of the Standards for Professional Practice. The plan so developed should reflect a consensus of the staff member(s) and the respective Department Chair. The Plan must be submitted on the current proposal form.

The plan will be developed and monitored formally only during the year the staff member is on cycle for appraisal only. However, the plan may extend over more than one year as professional growth should be dynamic and ongoing. During the "on cycle" year, the staff member must have at least one formal documented and recorded observation and follow-up conference conducted by the Department Chair or the Professional Growth Plan Administrator. The follow up conference may be recorded on either the Post Observation Form or the Contact Record Form.

Each staff member will select through collaboration with the Department Chair an appropriate Professional Growth Plan Administrator to advise and assist with the specific project. The

Professional Growth Plan Administrator is responsible for supervising the developed plan, usually making the one formal observation and conducting the formal follow-up conference, and conducting the summative appraisal of the actual Professional Growth Plan at year's end.

In addition to the Summative Appraisal of the Professional Growth Plan by the staff member and the Professional Growth Plan Administrator with the Department Chair, the Summative Appraisal will include an overall assessment of the staff member's performance. This overall assessment will become page 4 of the Summative and will report overall performance via the appropriate domains for the staff member and will include Areas of Strength and Recommendations for Future Focus. The overall assessment will be discussed in a summative appraisal conference with the Overall Performance Administrator (*and the Department Chair*) at which time the performance rating will be assigned.

All final segments of the Professional Growth Plan Summative Appraisal will be developed according to the outline in the Professional Growth Plan Summative Appraisal form.

Developing and Fulfilling the Professional Growth Plan

The key premises of the Professional Growth Plan approach are:

1. All staff members can and should improve their performance.
2. The Standards for Professional Practice define teaching and professional behavior in District 99.
3. The Professional Growth Plan must address specific components or elements in need of growth.
4. The Professional Growth Plan must be over and above routine, expected responsibility and improve staff performance to impact growth in student learning.
5. The Professional Growth Plan must be discussed and approved by your Department Chair and Building Administrator.

To begin, staff members should reflect on their performance and past appraisals to determine areas for growth and development. Staff may also want to complete (or consult previously completed) self-appraisal forms for areas identified for growth.

Once the focus is determined, the staff member(s) should meet with the Department Chair to review and develop the proposal for the Professional Growth Plan.

Several options for organizing Professional Growth Plans are included in this section. All approaches are recommended as possibilities. In collaborating with the Department Chair as the plan is developed, a modification or variation may be identified that better serves the teacher's needs to meet the goals of the plan.

The staff member working closely with the Professional Growth Plan Administrator for the plan should develop the procedures for documenting the plan completion and a schedule for the progress reviews.

Forms for the proposal as well as the forms for the Summative Appraisal are included in the appendix.

PLANNING WORKSHEET

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLAN

1. After reviewing the Standards for Professional Practice, what component(s) would you like to develop or improve?
2. What areas of improvement have emerged as suggestions from past appraisals or discussions?
3. What interests (related to the Standards) would you like to pursue that might enhance your performance as an educator?
4. What school, department, or District 99 initiative might you like to pursue as a Professional Growth Plan?

ORGANIZING FORMATS FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROJECTS

SELF-DIRECTED STUDY

Guiding, Assumptions for Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is the goal of all reflective practice and needs to be the goal of all performance appraisal programs. By self-assessing, one becomes motivated to change one's own thinking and behavior. Self-assessment can be accomplished through self-contracting to plan, conduct, review, and persist in one's development. Principles that guide self-assessment and self-contracting are:

1. Changes in an individual's thinking and behavior are desired outcomes of a performance appraisal system;
2. The purpose of self-assessment is to enable one to gain insights of self-understanding and self-expectation for one's own direction setting;
3. Individual changes only develop through self-direction; the goals for improvement may be developed with others; however, the assessee must commit to those goals as his/her own;
4. Good teaching and learning cannot be measured purely in quantitative terms; qualitative measures must also be used in assessing performance;
5. Genuine self-development, however, requires the input of others. Appraiser(s) and appraisee together can provide a broader view and perspective on any situation.

Written documentation to present evidence of changed behavior or improved performance can be gathered in a variety of ways, including portfolios.

The staff member who selects this approach will work alone but in collaboration with the Professional Growth Plan Administrator.

The staff member selecting this option may be focusing on research and eventual application or developing an application of a specific skill or program in his/her classroom.

LEARNING PARTNERS

Learning partners are two people who are in similar positions in an organization or across organizations. They share common concerns and agree to working together to discuss and plan ways to resolve those concerns. They may or may not actually observe the other in action. They may be staff members at the same grade level who plan lessons together and come together to discuss how the lessons went and what they learned about their own teaching, specific children or the curricula content. The learning partners may be two staff members who work at different grade levels or in different departments in a secondary school, who want to "partner" their two classes together periodically for learning experiences. They, too, could get together to plan and de-brief the joint activities from the class. Team teaching could be a learning partner arrangement if the two parties actually plan and de-brief their learning together. It is not a learning partner relationship if the partners are not committed to and devote time to facilitating each other's learning and growth.

Guidelines for Successful Implementation of Learning Partners:

Learning partner practices are usually less formal and less in-depth in reflective learning than the methods of coaching or mentoring. This is because observation in action does not always occur in the learning partner relationship. Therefore, when planning and debriefing activities and ideas together, it is helpful if the learning partners actually document what happened in the classroom themselves, so objective data can be used to discuss educational practices. There also needs to be a specific time, place, and purpose for the relationship. The two parties need to discuss and record what area of improvement they are working on and what they expect of each other. The relationship and each person's improvement are monitored according to these expectations.

Benefits of Learning Partners:

A learning partner relationship is a good way to begin to break down the isolation of educators. It helps one ease into reflective practice and it can improve one's ability to plan, to consider the needs of students and others, to articulate results and reactions, and to begin to self-assess.

MENTORING

Mentoring is an age-old process with recent resurgence in the business, health, law and finance professions. It is similar to learning partners; however, there may not be the equality in roles that is often the case in learning partner relationships. Mentors are trusted and experienced practitioners who have a personal and direct interest in the development of less experienced individuals. Mentorees or proteges are people who want to improve their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes by entering into a relationship with a mentor.

Yet, even more than all of these benefits, people report the times they worked with a mentor as "times of great significance". For many people, being engaged in mentor relationships is a life-changing, "turning-in-the-road" event. Like with the sages of the past, mentor relationships can set an educator in his/her path.

COLLEGIAL COACHING

Collegial coaching involves an on-going relationship with a partner. It also involves a cycle of observation. The partner relationship is extremely strong as in the mentoring process; yet, more mutual and equal. However, unlike the mentoring relationship, there is no appraisal in the collegial coaching relationship. There are generic coaching programs, aimed at the self-directed concerns of the staff member, or content-specific coaching programs, aimed at a particular teaching strategy, such as refining one's use of cooperative learning. However, whether generic or specific, in each coaching cycle and in the on-going relationship, there is a "something" to coach. There is a declared area of improvement for each partner.

The definition we use for coaching is:

"Coaching is a conversation, focused on an educator's thinking about his/her teaching and learning processes, that leads to a refinement of professional practice. It involves a coach providing on-going support through companionship, feedback and assistance in refining current educational practices and/or learning new ones. It is a confidential process which includes observation, reflection and feedback."

Roles and Responsibilities in the Coaching Relationship

Volunteer partners select each other. The partners have the same responsibilities to each other in supporting each others' development; however, they may have differing areas of improvement focus. Formal training in Cognitive Coaching supports and enhances this approach.

STUDY GROUPS

These are small groups where no more than six people meet regularly to discuss, study and plan topics of common interest. The groups could be formed to:

- (a) implement curricular, teaching and assessment innovations,
- (b) to collaboratively plan school improvement, and/or
- (c) conduct research on effective teaching and learning, other educational practices, or organizational change.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

A network is a professional community organized around a common theme or purpose. A network, according to McConkey and Crandall, is "a pattern of interaction characterized by information exchange, usually leading to other human interactions." This holds true for electronic networks as well. Networks are characterized by the spontaneity, flexibility and informality in contacts with other network members. Network members regard each other as fellow problem solvers from whom one willingly asks for help. Networks can serve four distinct functions:

1. *Resource Networks* - these provide data and information to the user who reads the information from data files maintained by the network;
2. *E-Mail Networks* - these provide the capacity to send messages to other users;

3. *Dialogic Networks* - these allow the community of users to carry on discussion and conferences with each other; and
4. *Extended Networking* – through contacts outside the boundaries of one’s own school (with businesses, individuals, hospitals, educators, etc.), staff members use networking as a means for professional growth.

TOOLS FOR DOCUMENTING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

As a process, professional growth requires that the individual who participates keep some kind of record of progress toward an established goal. Various approaches lend themselves to particular types of documentation. The participant needs to determine which approach or continuation of approaches best fits the selected project.

JOURNAL OR DIARY

Perhaps the easiest format to reflect on growth is the professional journal or diary. In this process, the participant makes regular and systematic entries that record the progress toward the goal. Such entries should provide both an objective accounting of action taken as well as insights into successes or concerns encountered. From the data so recorded can and should come the necessary material to support the success of the effort. Self discipline is crucial to assure that the journal is kept up to date.

ARTIFACT COLLECTION

Closely akin to the journal is the collecting of significant artifacts that document the staff member’s efforts. The key element for success is the inclusion of the right quantity and quality of pieces. The artifacts should help the observer and the participant see the progress and development of the targeted goal. Pieces included may contain explanation or commentary by the staff member but ought chiefly to be a chronological or topical collection of evidence to show important progress toward the established goals. Examples of student work would be appropriate.

PORTFOLIOS

Perhaps the most sophisticated approach to the documentation process would be the careful development of the Professional Portfolio.

Traditionally, portfolios are used by professionals such as architects, artists and models as a means of accumulating work samples to show potential clients. In a reflective and assessment sense, they are developed to show one’s supervisor or clientele one’s accomplishments and professional growth. The material included in the Portfolio is designed to show the breadth and depth of one’s abilities and professional interests. By compiling and reflecting on the content of the Portfolio, the educator can gain valuable information about his/her craft.

Examples of Portfolios:

Best Works' Portfolio: contains what the owner deems is their highest quality work. It is designed to show mastery of craft, imaginative use of talents and resources, creative thinking and reflection as well as expressive work;

Collections of Work Portfolio: catalogs what happens in classrooms and provides evidence for one's supervisor or others. Collections of Work Portfolios help to keep a record of what has been done and help to gauge growth and change. However, "collections" are often not interpretable to others and may not document the actual learning that occurred;

Process Portfolio: contains a series of developmental snapshots that highlight and document change over time in one piece or type of work. Different drafts or versions of educator practice over time, combined with journal, questionnaire or interview information, help one gain an understanding of how the educator thought through the project. Process Portfolios not only give a picture of the educator's thinking and decision-making, but also his/her flexibility, sensitivity to clues, risk taking and pedagogical knowledge.

Educator portfolios, just as with student portfolios, should be regularly discussed, not just for appraisal, but as a time of genuine sharing and reflection on learning.

Contents of Portfolios:

Whatever the educator determines shows evidence of effective teaching and his/her own development should be a part of one's Portfolio. Artifacts could include:

- a philosophical belief statement about teaching and learning;
- videotapes of the classroom;
- samples of student work done over a 2 to 3 month period, with staff member and student analysis of the work;
- lesson or units plans, and how those lessons or units were changed in the process of implementation;
- documentation of courses attended;
- notes from students, parents, community;
- journal writing samples;
- a self-review report;
- minutes of meetings one was actively engaged in;
- notes on coaching or other involvement with staff;
- photographs, articles written, newspaper articles.

The Portfolio should show how the educator analyzes, evaluates and modifies his/her practice and how s/he acts as advisor and advocate for students or others. The Portfolio should also show how the educator collaborates with colleagues, families and other community members on instructional and school activities that benefit students.

Benefits of Portfolios:

By reflecting upon and assessing one's own work, an educator can better integrate the various facets of effective leading, teaching and learning into a more unified whole. The Portfolio documents growth, change and risk-taking. It presents a broad view of teaching practice, can be adapted to any experience and motivational level and provides a good supplement to observation. Portfolios can also provide a good basis for coaching specific developmental changes because collections over time and analysis of those collections can clearly illustrate change.

Sometimes administrators or colleagues ask that an introduction to the Portfolio be written in letter form. The letter could address the following questions:

- What is in your Portfolio and why did you choose these samples?
- How has your work improved?
- List some goals you will set for yourself for the next few months.
- How does your Portfolio show your strengths?
- What do you think people will learn about you from your Portfolio?

ACTION RESEARCH

Perhaps one of the most systematic approaches to professional growth is to actually engage in formal Action Research. This process establishes the validity of a project in a very careful manner. It may be done as an individual or as a group. It is a category almost by itself for those who choose to pursue it formally. It also may be done in a single year or as a multi-year project.

Background:

In the past, staff members and administrators have been more consumers of research data than creators of it. As a result, studies do not have the impact they could on staff member's knowledge and practice. Some of the questions academic researchers ask are not pertinent to teachers, and conversely, some of the questions most relevant to classroom teachers are not studied. Action research, on the other hand, involves staff members and principals in the conduct of research for their own intended use. Staff members using inquiry methods in their own settings have more effect in improving practices than does the strategy of disseminating research results in handouts or through staff development programs.

Guiding Assumptions about Action Research:

- 1 Educators are intelligent, inquiring individuals with legitimate expertise and important experience.
2. Educators are inclined to search for data to answer their own questions and to reflect on the data gathered in order to problem solve.
3. Through conducting their own research, educators develop new understandings that contribute to their professional growth.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Research Team:

Action research programs can be set up in three different formats:

- Individual action and reflection,
- Individual action and collaborative reflection, or
- Collaborative action and reflection.

No matter which format is used in action research, the inquiring educator is the one to define the research question. Most often, the inquiring educator is a member of a collaborative team who are all looking at different aspects of the same question. This team usually includes other teaching or administrative colleagues and a university researcher. However, as stated above, educators may pursue their own research, taking opportunities throughout the inquiry to discuss their research procedures and progress with a university researcher and/or other colleagues. When working collaboratively, in either the action or reflection stages, each team member becomes involved in some aspect of the inquiry. They may be using their classrooms as a laboratory to control and test out different variables and to gather data related to the research question. The team, then, regularly meets to compare data, to share findings and information from various data sources, and to draw conclusions and solidify results. Each team member needs to assist the others in remaining true to the research process and in using the findings to enhance one's teaching and learning.

STEPS IN THE ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

1. Decide on a Question or "Thematic Concern" to Research

2. Write a Rationale for Change and an Action Plan

- A. Describe your concern/question and WHY you chose it; Show why you think it is a *significant educational concern* which relates both to *relevant educational literature* and the *circumstances in your situation*;
- B. Outline membership of your action group and why this is an appropriate group to work with;
- C. Describe and give rationale for *specific changes* you plan to make (referring to changes in each of the three areas in #2 above);
- D. Outline a more *detailed plan and schedule of work* for the project (i.e., who is doing what, when, where, and how);
- E. Describe how the action group plans relate to others involved in the group and how they could be affected by the changes;
- F. Describe how you plan to *monitor* changes and *collect data* for each of the 3 areas in #2;
- G. Describe how your data could count as *evidence* and help to foster your (and others) further *reflection* and action.

3. Enact the Plan and Observe How it Works

- Observe your current status in each of 3 areas;
- Observe your changing attitude and patterns;
- Observe tendencies toward institutionalization.

4. Reflection: Analyze, Synthesize, Interpret, Explain, and Draw Conclusions (in each area and across areas)

- Reflect based on evidence and literature
- Discuss your reflections with action group members
- *Reflection Prompts:*
 1. How does your account of your action compare with what you planned to do? What was your and others perceptions of the events?
 2. What educational issues arise from what you've noticed?
 3. Did your practice improve? How? Why?
 4. Did your understanding of your practice improve? How? Why?
 5. What changes in language, practice, relationships and within the organization have occurred?
 6. What contradictions between these areas are you finding?
 7. What can be done to alleviate these contradictions or inconsistencies?
 8. What rethinking of the question or concern is necessary?
 9. What replanning is necessary?
 10. What should your next action steps be?

5. Re-Plan and Continue the Spiral of Learning

USING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLAN WITH ASSISTANCE

The Building Administrator responsible for the appraisal of a staff member may determine that circumstances warrant additional support of the teacher's growth. The Professional Growth with

Assistance component of the appraisal process is designed to provide structure for the growth. Professional Growth with Assistance is based on the following foundation:

- Improvement plan developed by Department Chair and Professional Growth Plan administrator, with input of the staff member, and is based on the Standards for Professional Practice and identified areas of concern

Professional Growth with Assistance is available to any tenured staff member that is not performing at a level commensurate with District 99's Standards of Professional Practice.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Professional Growth with Assistance plan is as follows:

- To improve classroom effectiveness to a competent level
- To support growth in professional practice

The methods used in the Professional Growth with Assistance Plan are as follows:

- Traditional observation and feedback focused specifically on identified areas of needed improvement.
- Monitoring of behavior identified for growth

The following levels of support will be utilized within the Professional Growth with Assistance Plan:

- Cooperating staff member assigned as support
- Additional training as needed

TEACHER APPRAISAL SCHEDULE

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Two (2) Formal Observations annually until all goals of the plan are met

DESIGNATED ADMINISTRATOR

- Two (2) Formal Observations annually until all goals of the plan are met

APPRAISAL OF STAFF RECEIVING AN UNSATISFACTORY RATING

Staff receiving an 'Unsatisfactory' rating will be subject to the following:

- Remediation plan will be initiated (see contract)

APPRAISAL OF PART TIME STAFF

Part-time employees will be evaluated each of their first four years using the same approach as full-time employees. However, the number of formal observations will be adjusted.

Part-time staff with a .6 to .9 full-time equivalency (FTE) assignment will have a minimum of three (3) formal observations. Two (2) formal observations shall be completed by the Department Chair and one (1) formal observation shall be completed by the Designated Administrator.

Part-time staff with a .5 or less full-time equivalency assignment will have a minimum of two (2) formal observations. One formal observation shall be completed by the Department Chair and one by the Designated Administrator.

Part-time staff with more than a .5 FTE assignment will also develop the Professional Portfolio components for the first four years.

A mentor will be assigned to all part-time first year staff.

Part-time staff who have worked in District 99 for more than four consecutive school years will be placed on an every other year appraisal cycle beginning with the sixth year.

Beginning with the sixth year, the part-time staff member (.6 FTE or more) will develop a focused Professional Growth Plan in conjunction with the Department Chair.

Part-time staff members assigned .5 FTE or less will receive continued feedback through formal observations with a minimum of two every other year beginning with the sixth consecutive year.

Part-time staff members will complete the Summative process if assigned .6 or more FTE. However, no rating will be assigned.

Appraisal documents to be placed in the Personnel File should include Post Observation Forms, Contact Record Forms and Summative Appraisals. Memos and other correspondence may be included with the staff member's knowledge.

APPRAISAL PROCEDURES - MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

The following information will clarify responsibilities when staff members serve in a variety of settings:

A. Staff Member Assigned to More than One Department

A non-tenured staff member with an assignment in two departments in one building will be evaluated by both Department Chairs, with the number of appraisals by each Department Chair determined by the staff member's schedule. A tenured staff member will develop the Professional Growth Plan in the department of majority time assignment.

B. Staff Member Assigned to More than One Campus

A non-tenured staff member assigned to both North and South High Schools will be observed by Department Chairs at both schools. The assigned building administrator at the school where the staff member is assigned the greater number of periods shall be responsible for conducting the Summative Appraisal after consultation with the Department Chairs at both schools.

C. Timelines for formal observation follow-up will be as specified below:

1. The post conference shall occur within two teacher workdays of the observation.
2. The Post Observation Form shall be completed and signed within five teacher work days of the post observation conference.
3. Dates may be extended under unusual circumstances by mutual agreement.

D. Appraisal documents to be placed in the staff member's Personnel File include Post Observation Forms, Contact Record Forms, and Summative Appraisal. Memos and other correspondence may be included with the staff member's knowledge.

E. Job share staff members (tenured) will continue to be evaluated as full-time tenured staff members with the same expectations and requirements.

F. Employees retiring at the end of the year from District 99, if on cycle for appraisal the final year, will complete the Professional Growth Plan but will not have a Summative Appraisal. All other staff members on cycle, tenured and non-tenured, must receive a formal Summative Appraisal at the end of the year.

G. The Summative Appraisal document will include in the comments for Domain IV a statement reviewing the staff member's attendance since the last written appraisal.

APPENDIX – APPRAISAL FORMS