

ARLINGTON OPTIONAL EVALUATION PLAN

A Summary of the Philosophy and Procedures Related to the Professional Growth Plan* (PGP)

The Arlington Professional Growth Plan was approved by the ATA, the AAA and the Board of Education in the mid-1990's as an alternate approach to conducting the clinically based professional performance review. The PGP was viewed as a process for tenured teachers to satisfy the annual professional evaluation that is required by SED Regulations. There was a desire to offer an alternate model for the evaluation of the professional staff based upon the "collegial model." The Professional Growth Plan (PGP) sought to separate the supervisory relationship between the administrator and the teacher from the professional growth process. The PGP approach called for a professional and collegial collaboration between the administrator and the teacher.

As opposed to the traditional clinical evaluation model, which focuses more on the evaluation of current instruction based upon a formal observation, the focus of the PGP was to be directed toward instructional improvement by providing a means for teachers to become more involved in their own professional development.

The clinical observation remains the method of professional evaluation for non-tenured teachers. The PGP is intended for tenured teachers only. Probationary, temporary and part-time professionals will continue to be evaluated two times each year using the "Annual Performance Review" model and the appropriate evaluation form (Appendix B, C, D and E).

Once achieving tenure, a teacher becomes eligible to participate in a professional growth plan. The PGP option is designed to offer a variety of alternatives. The following are some, but not all, of the possible PGP approaches.

- Mentoring
- Peer Coaching
- Clinical Observation
- Research- Topic of mutual interest and benefit to the individual and the school
- Conferencing/coursework
- Program Development

These suggested areas for the PGP are not intended to be the sum total of all possible PGP's. All PGPs must be geared toward professional growth and the improvement of instruction. Virtually any professional growth activity that the administrator and the professional are able to jointly agree upon would be a valid PGP. The PGP was designed to allow the tenured teacher an opportunity to explore a wide range of options, alternatives, approaches, tasks, plans, proposals, coursework, and special projects.

At least once a year the administrator and the professional will meet to discuss the progress of the PGP. This discussion of the progress of the PGP constitutes the basis for the teacher's professional evaluation for the year. During the school year, the administrator working with the teacher in implementing the PGP becomes a "facilitator" in helping the teacher to accomplish the objectives of the PGP. Throughout the PGP process, the teacher and the administrator shall be at the highest level of collegial and professional relationship.

If in the opinion of the administrator a teacher's classroom performance is deemed unsatisfactory, the teacher can be removed from the PGP and returned to the Annual Performance Review model. As an intervening step, however, the ATA could be invited to assist in working with the teacher to improve in the area(s) of unsatisfactory performance. A teacher may withdraw from the PGP process following consultation with the principal.

The following is one way in which the Professional Growth Plan Process can be initiated.

- An invitation is made by the building principal to tenured teachers in a building to participate in the PGP process.
- A tenured teacher wishing to engage in a PGP meets with the administrator to discuss the proposed PGP
- Following tentative agreement on the PGP proposal, the goals and the outcomes, the teacher submits a formal proposal on the District "PGP Form."
- Following the mutual agreement of the teacher and the administrator, the PGP is implemented
- A tenured teacher whose desire to participate in the PGP process is not supported by the administrator is encouraged to discuss such with the administrator and be made aware of the rationale for being placed in the Annual Performance Review model.

At the conclusion of the PGP, the teacher and the administrator discuss the implementation of the PGP. Comments are made by the teacher and the administrator on the PGP Form. The PGP will be deemed successful even if part, or all, of the venture does not reach the anticipated expectations of one or both parties.

It has been some ten years since the introduction of the Professional Growth Plan in the Arlington School District. The PGP was introduced with the strong support of the AAA, ATA and the Board of Education. Since that time, there has been a significant change in the teaching staff and the administrators. It is appropriate at this time to reaffirm the principles and the procedures in order that the PGP may continue as a viable alternate to the traditional clinical evaluation model as exemplified in the Annual Performance Review.

*Appendix "A" of Annual Professional Performance Review Plan

L. Edward Lynn
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