

ARTICLE 9
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM

9.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Professional Growth and Advancement Program is to retain employees, improve the unit members' standard of service, and promote development of the classified staff.

9.2 Eligibility

Eligibility for participation in the Professional Growth and Advancement Program is limited to all permanent classified employees with satisfactory performance as indicated by evaluation reports.

9.3 Coursework Criteria

9.3.1 The subject matter of Coursework must be related to any position the District employs. In addition, upon request of the unit member, Coursework approved by the Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, may qualify such unit member for another position in District classified service.

9.3.2 Courses which have not been approved by the Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, prior to enrollment will not be eligible for the Professional Growth Program.

9.3.3 College-level coursework must be taken at regionally accredited educational agencies.

9.3.4 All costs of registration, books, mileage, subsistence, and other similar costs of participating in the coursework shall be borne by the individual unit member.

9.3.5 An employee will not receive point credit for attendance at District workshops if the employee's attendance occurs at such time as s/he is being paid for regular duties by the District or if the District is paying the costs and expenses of the workshop.

9.4 Credit Towards Stipend

9.4.1 A maximum of sixty (60) points may be applied toward Professional Growth stipends. Quarter-unit credits will be converted to semester units prior to awarding points for the Professional Growth Program.

9.4.2 Credit toward the stipend may be earned at a community college, university, trade school, adult education class, workshop, or training program.

9.4.2.1 For completed coursework taken at a four (4)-year university and/or a community college, credit will be granted at the rate of one (1) point per semester unit (one quarter unit = $\frac{2}{3}$ of a semester unit).

9.4.2.2 For an approved trade school and/or adult education class, credit will be granted at the rate of one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) point per semester unit (one quarter unit = $\frac{2}{3}$ of a semester unit) of verified attendance.

9.4.2.3 For workshops and training programs approved by the District, credit will be granted at the rate of one-half (1/2) point for each sixteen (16) hours of verified attendance.

9.4.3 To receive point credit, a letter grade of “C” or better, or a “pass” grade must be achieved.

9.4.4 The Professional Growth Program will consist of four (4) stages:

Stage 1: Fifteen (15) completed points.

Stage 2: An additional fifteen (15) completed points.

Stage 3: An additional fifteen (15) completed points.

Stage 4: An additional fifteen (15) completed points.

Approved coursework in progress at the end of one stage may be carried over to another stage.

9.5 Stipend

9.5.1 The annual stipend for completion of Stage 1(15) units shall be \$868.00

9.5.2 The annual stipend for completion of Stage 2 (30) units shall be \$868.00 in addition to Stage 1 stipend.

9.5.3 The annual stipend for completion of Stage 3 (45) units shall be \$868.00 in addition to Stage 2 stipend.

9.5.4 The annual stipend for completion of Stage 4 (60) units shall be \$868.00 in addition to Stage 3 stipend.

9.5.5 Professional Growth stipends will be adjusted to reflect any percentage increase which may be applied to the salary schedule. Such an adjustment shall be made each time that a percentage increase is applied to the salary schedule.

9.6 Required Procedures

9.6.1 To enter the program, a unit member shall file an “Intent to Participate in the Professional Growth Program” with the Human Resources Office. The starting date of each unit member’s program will be determined by the date the Intent form is approved by the Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources.

9.6.2 If a unit member wishes to receive Professional Growth credit, s/he must submit a written statement to the Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, requesting Professional Growth credit for the course prior to enrolling in the course. The Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, will review the statement submitted by the unit member, make a judgment as to the acceptability of the course for the Professional Growth credit, and advise the unit member of the decision.

- 9.6.3 Point credit will not be granted without a verified transcript from the school attended. Verification from an approved workshop course shall consist of a fee statement, program of activities, or registration receipt which must be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, within thirty (30) calendar days after the activity.
- 9.6.4 The Professional Growth stipend will be paid annually in one (1) lump sum in June of each year. When a unit member retires, he/she shall be entitled to his/her Professional Growth stipend on a prorated basis.
- 9.6.5 Point credit must be earned by June 30 in order to qualify for a June stipend. Transcript verification of point credit must be submitted to the Human Resources Office no later than August 15.
- 9.6.6 All approved points will be verified by the Human Resources Office and recorded on the Permanent Growth Record of the employee as the course or training is completed.

9.7 Teacher Development Program

- 9.7.1 Classified employees who have completed their initial probationary period with the District may make application for the Teacher Development Program (Appendix E) for the purpose of obtaining a teaching credential to prepare them for teaching positions within the District, subject to the following:
 - 9.7.1.1 Submission of a completed application form which indicates agreement to pursue an educational program to prepare for a career as a teacher in Redlands.
 - 9.7.1.2 Submission of a description of the course(s) content and applicability to an approved program of studies leading to a California teaching credential.
- 9.7.2 A maximum of five (5) classified employees may participate per year. The District reserves the right to increase the number of participants in any one year.
 - 9.7.2.1 The District shall provide the Association, on an annual basis, with a list of all approved participants in the program.
- 9.7.3 Reimbursement of registration/tuition fees shall not be made in increments less than fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per application and shall not exceed four thousand dollars (\$4,000) per employee per year.
- 9.7.4 Admission to and reimbursement from the program shall be subject to the approval of the District based upon the following:
 - 9.7.4.1 Verification of the applicant's completion of an Associate of Arts degree, or the equivalent;
 - 9.7.4.2 The relevance of the course(s) to obtaining a California teaching credential;
 - 9.7.4.3 The course load to be carried by the employee;
 - 9.7.4.4 Recommendation of the applicant's immediate supervisor;

- 9.7.4.5 The needs of the District;
- 9.7.4.6 The applicant's suitability to enter the teaching profession; and
- 9.7.4.7 Written agreement to complete the program within five (5) years.

The decision of the District shall be final and binding, and shall not be subject to the grievance procedure set forth in Article 19.

- 9.7.5 Unit-member-initiated education or training shall not be considered as time actually worked and normally shall not occur during regular work hours.
- 9.7.6 After obtaining a California teaching credential, unit members participating in this "Teacher Development Program" shall submit to the District an application for employment as a teacher. If offered a teaching contract, the unit member shall accept the employment offer.
- 9.7.7 Failure to enter into a teaching contract, if offered, withdrawal from the program, or failure to complete credential requirements within five (5) years, shall result in a payroll deduction of all tuition reimbursement under this program. Other methods for repayment of tuition reimbursement may be mutually agreed upon by the District and the unit member.
- 9.7.8 After notifying the Association, the District reserves the right to terminate or suspend this program at any time on June 30 of any given year.