

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 151

Date of Issue: February 8, 2010

Effective: July 1, 2010, until revoked or modified

Subject: PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAYS DEVOTED TO PROVINCIAL EDUCATION PRIORITIES

Application: Directors of Education
Secretaries and Supervisory Officers of School Authorities
Director, Provincial Schools Branch
Superintendent, Centre Jules-Léger

Reference: Regulation 304, "School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days"

Introduction

Regulation 304, "School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days", made under the Education Act, sets out the conditions governing the establishment of school year calendars. The regulation provides that school boards¹ may designate up to six professional activity (PA) days² per school year. Two of those PA days must be devoted to provincial education priorities that are currently identified in subsection 4(2) and Schedule 1 of the regulation.

Effective July 1, 2010, Regulation 304 will no longer identify the criteria that determine the scope of the professional activities for the two mandatory PA days and will no longer include Schedule 1, which contains the possible topics for those PA days. Instead, the criteria and topics are set out in the Appendix to this memorandum, and are effective July 1, 2010. If the provincial priorities for education should change in subsequent years, the criteria and topics in the Appendix will be updated.

Legislative Authority

On December 15, 2009, the Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, 2009 came into force. It amends subsection 8(1) of the Education Act to give the Minister of Education the authority to "establish policies and guidelines respecting criteria and topics for the professional activity days that are required by regulation and require boards to comply with the policies and guidelines" (paragraph 28).

Requirements for School Boards

School boards must continue to prepare their school year calendars according to the requirements set out in Regulation 304. Accordingly, boards must designate two PA days and may designate up to four additional PA days per school year. Boards must ensure that the professional activities on

all PA days are consistent with the definition of "professional activity" found in the regulation.³ Boards must ensure that professional activities on the two mandatory PA days are devoted to the provincial education priorities set out in the Appendix to this memorandum. If boards designate one or more of the four remaining PA days available per school year, they must ensure that some of the professional activities relate to curriculum development, implementation, and review.

Boards must continue to submit their school year calendars to the Ministry of Education according to the dates specified in the regulation.

Appendix: Criteria and Topics for the Two Mandatory Professional Activity Days

The criteria that determine the scope of the professional activities for the two PA days required under paragraph 1 of subsection 2(3.1) of Regulation 304 are as follows:

- The professional activities are devoted to the professional learning of teachers with respect to improving student achievement and student success.
- The professional activities are devoted to the professional learning of teachers with respect to closing the gaps in student achievement.

The following are the possible topics for professional activities relating to improving student achievement and student success:

- early learning
- performing assessments and evaluations for and of learning
- facilitating parental and community engagement
- using data analysis to inform instruction
- developing and implementing board and school improvement plans
- creating an equitable and inclusive classroom climate that is conducive to learning
- developing student and classroom learning profiles
- facilitating transitions for students who are entering school, changing grades or schools, or leaving school
- promoting instructional leadership
- developing skills for teacher inquiry and reflective practice

The following are the possible topics for professional activities relating to closing the gaps in student achievement:

- developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- implementing activities related to assistive technologies, differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning, and professional learning technologies
- facilitating parental involvement in Identification, Placement, and Review Committees established under Part II of Ontario Regulation 181/98, "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils", made under the Education Act, and in the development of IEPs
- using differentiated instructional and assessment strategies and resources that are responsive to students' learning needs and that reflect Ontario's diverse student population
- developing and implementing strategies to close the gaps in mathematical literacy
- developing and implementing strategies to close the gaps in literacy
- developing and implementing strategies to improve boys' literacy

- developing and implementing early and ongoing instructional interventions
 - using strategies to support English language learners and students in Actualisation linguistique en français and Perfectionnement du français
 - integrating the use of manipulative aids and technology to support a range of learning styles
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1. In this memorandum, *school board(s)* and *board(s)* refer to district school boards and school authorities.

2. Regulation 304, paragraphs 1 and 2 of subsection 2(3.1).

3. As stated in section 1(1) of Regulation 304, "'professional activity' includes evaluation of the progress of pupils, consultation with parents, the counselling of pupils, curriculum and program evaluation and development, professional development of teachers and attendance at educational conferences, but does not include preparation by teachers for classes or instruction."