

Sweetwater Union High School District

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PROGRAM
for
CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

Policy Statement

The purpose of this program shall be to improve the standards of service of the classified staff; to extend and constantly improve the standards of on the job performance of each classified employee; and to encourage the employee to improve his/her relationships with students, teachers, other employees, and the public.

This professional growth program is not intended to restrict in any way the training and self improvement efforts a classified employee may undertake on his/her own initiative. However, such training shall be considered applicable to a professional growth increment only if it meets the standards as set forth in this article.

Eligibility

Unit members in a paid status who have attained permanency in the Sweetwater Union High School District, shall be eligible to receive compensation under the professional growth program.

Course work completed or entered into prior to employment with the District is not applicable towards the professional growth increment program. However, recognized course work entered into during probationary employment, but prior to becoming a permanent employee, is applicable. No professional growth compensation will be given during an employee's probationary period.

Ineligibility

If a classified employee voluntarily terminates employment with the District and is subsequently re-employed in a classified position, such employee shall not be entitled to credit or payment for any previous professional growth increments.

General Regulations

Course work taken during an employee's duty hours will not be applied toward professional growth credit.

Course work or in-service programs for which the District pays tuition and/or expenses will not be applied toward professional growth increment. However, if the tuition and/or expenses are funded through a grant, the purpose of which is to prepare paraprofessionals to become teachers, the course work will be applied toward professional growth increments.

No credit will be given for course work taken prior to July 1, 1982.

Employees who seek professional growth credit must obtain prior course work approval from the Director of Classified Personnel or his/her designee. Request for prior course work approval shall be submitted on a District prepared form.

Course work credit will be granted based on the following criteria:

- Related to the employee's job assignment, or professional enrichment.
- Earned at an accredited adult school, ROP program, community college, college, or university. ROP and adult courses will be subject to evaluation by the appropriate division head for the purpose of determining the number of professional growth units to be credited.
- Earned at a workshop which has been granted unit credit designation either by a college/university or by the District.

Repeat or remedial courses will not be approved for increment credit.

All applicable units toward a professional growth increment shall be passed with a grade requirement of "C" or better (2.0 on a 4.0 scale). A "satisfactory," "pass," or "credit" will be accepted in lieu of a grade of "C" or better if evidence is provided by the college/university registrar or an official printed schedule, indicating the course(s) is/are only provided on a "satisfactory/unsatisfactory," "pass/fail," or "credit/no credit" basis.

Criteria for Increments

A professional growth increment shall consist of fifteen (15) semester units or equivalent quarter units of approved course work.

No more than a total of thirty (30) semester units will be allowed for professional growth increment compensation each one (1) year period (July 1 to June 30).

Criteria for Increments (continued)

A maximum of six (6) professional growth increments will be approved per employee.

Course Evaluation Committee

If approval of a course is denied and the employee appeals the denial, a course evaluation committee shall meet. The committee shall review the course work in question and make recommendations to the Director of Classified Personnel or his/her designee, who, in turn, shall make the final decision as to whether or not the course is to be accepted for increment credit. The final decision of the Director of Classified Personnel may not be grieved.

The course evaluation committee shall consist of three (3) CSEA representatives (one [1] from each chapter). The chairperson of the committee shall be the Director of Classified Personnel, or his/her designee.

The committee shall meet as needed when called into a meeting by the Director of Classified Personnel, or his/her designee. When an appeal has been filed, the CSEA may call the Director of Classified Personnel to establish a meeting pursuant to this section.

Application for and Verification of Increment

A unit member must file application for payment for an increment no later than September 30 for Semester I and February 28 for Semester II.

The burden of proof for the professional growth increment is the employee's responsibility. An official copy of the adult school, college, or university transcript or ROP Certificate of Competence and an official document from the institution which identifies the course number system, grading, and the units of work (such as quarter or semester units), and any other material pertinent to the interpretation of the official transcripts must be submitted by the employee to the Division of Human Resources by December 31 for Semester I and May 31 for Semester II.

Payment Schedule for Increment

Unit members who have permanency with the District shall be entitled to payment for earned increments of two hundred-fifty dollars (\$250) per year per increment. Monies for earned increments shall be paid in addition to the employee's regular salary and shall be subject to customary payroll deductions for retirement, social security, withholding tax, and time off with loss of salary, etc.

Information to Employees

It is hereby acknowledged that participation in the professional growth program is entirely voluntary on behalf of the employee and participation shall not be construed to be a part of employment nor a requirement towards attaining any of the rights, benefits or burdens accorded to non-certificated employees.

Excerpt from Agreements between the Sweetwater Union High School District and the California School Employees Association (Chapters 258, 471, and 731), 7/1/01 – 6/30/04