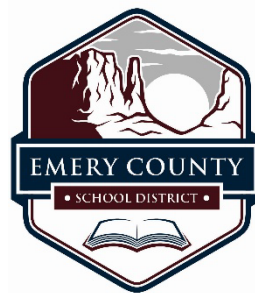


Emery County School District



Policy: GCH—Professional Staff Orientation

Date Adopted: 7 September 1988

Current Review / Revision: 14 January 2026

The Board recognizes that an appropriate orientation program can aid in the assimilation of new staff members into the school system and can also contribute to the continued growth of returning personnel. Therefore, to acquaint staff members with their duties and responsibilities for the school year, an orientation period of one or more days will be held as determined by the Superintendent.

All first-year provisional educators will be assigned a consulting educator to assist the provisional educator in his / her entry into the Emery County School District.

Orientation of staff members new to the school system will be the responsibility of the Principal, who will be assisted by the consulting educator, and may extend over a longer period of time. The orientation will provide a broadly-based effort to supply information and background details which will improve the new employee's understanding of the school's and district's framework, including policies of the Board, rules and regulations, and the instructional program.

Educator Induction, Mentoring, and Professional Learning

Educator Induction Program—

The District and each school shall develop and implement an educator induction program for educators who are: licensed as associate educators, licensed as professional educators and have less than 3 years of experience teaching, and licensed under District-specific licensure during the first 3 years of working in the District. The induction program shall provide for:

1. A plan for on-going support and development of an educator, which may include reflective goal setting, implementation of action steps, and evaluation of outcomes that lead to refinement in instructional practice.
2. Assistance in meeting the Utah Effective Educator Standards (Utah Admin. Rules R277-330).
3. Mentoring (including observation and feedback beginning early in the program).
4. Evaluation consistent with Policy DG, including observation and feedback from the principal.
5. For associate educators, support in meeting the requirements for a professional educator license.

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-308-3 \(April 9, 2024\)](#)

Mentoring for Provisional Educators—

The principal or immediate supervisor of a provisional educator shall assign a mentor for the provisional educator. Mentors serving educators in the District's educator induction program must have received or will receive training in mentoring educators. Where possible, the mentor shall be a career educator with at least three years of experience and performing substantially the same duties as the provisional educator. The mentor shall assist the provisional educator to become effective and competent in the teaching profession and school system, including the Utah Effective Educator Standards. A mentor may not act as the evaluator of an educator that the mentor is assigned to

serve. An educator serving as a mentor may receive compensation for mentoring services in addition to the educator's regular salary.

[Utah Code § 53G-11-509 \(2024\)](#)

[Utah Code § 53G-11-520\(13\) \(2024\)](#)

Learning Opportunities for Professional Educators—

Each year, each District employee holding a professional educator license shall be provided professional learning opportunities which upon completion would enable the employee to complete the equivalent of 20 license renewal hours as defined by Utah Administrative Rules R277-302-7, including trainings required by state law or State Board of Education rule. The District shall maintain documentation of these professional learning activities or shall provide the documentation to the employee. If an employee does not participate in these activities, the District shall notify the employee and the State Superintendent that the employee is not eligible to use the simplified license renewal provisions provided under Utah Administrative Rules R277-302-4(1)(a).

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-302-6 \(May 8, 2024\)](#)

Professional Learning Standards—

“Professional learning” means a comprehensive, sustained, and evidence-based approach to improving teachers’ and principals’ effectiveness in raising student achievement. “Evidence-based” means that a strategy (not including reading software) demonstrates a statistically significant effect, of at least a 0.40 effect size, on improving student outcomes based on either strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study (as further defined by the State Board of Education) or moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study (as further defined by the State Board of Education). “Evidence-informed” means that a strategy is developed using high-quality research outside of a controlled setting in the given field (as further defined by the State Board of Education) and includes strategies and activities with a strong scientific basis for use (as further defined by the State Board of Education). Professional development plans shall implement high quality professional learning which meets the following standards:

1. It occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, individual and collective responsibility, and goal alignment;
2. It requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate for professional learning and create support systems for professional learning;
3. It requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning;
4. It uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning;
5. It integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes;
6. It applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change;
7. It aligns its outcomes with:
 - a. Performance standards for teachers and school administrators as described in rules of the State Board of Education and
 - b. Performance standards for students as described in the core standards for Utah public schools adopted by the State Board of Education;
8. It incorporates the use of technology in the design, implementation, and evaluation of high-quality professional learning practices and includes targeted professional learning on the use of technology devices to enhance the teaching and learning environment and the integration of technology in content delivery; and

9. It uses evidence-informed core materials and evidence-based instructional practices and intervention materials.

[Utah Code § 53G-11-303\(1\), \(2\) \(2023\)](#)

State-Funded Professional Development—

“Paid professional hours” means hours outside of an educator’s contracted hours which are “qualifying time.” “Qualifying time” includes the hours spent engaged in professional learning, including time engaged in the professional learning and time spent traveling for the professional learning. “Qualifying time” does not include time spent outside of the professional learning environment or between the professional learning activities or sessions once the professional learning has ended for the day.

[Utah Code § 53F-7-203\(1\) \(2024\)](#)

The District shall use the funding provided by the State Board of Education under Utah Code § 53F-7-203 to provide paid professional hours to the following educators: general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors, school administrators, school specialists, student support staff, school psychologists, speech language pathologists, and audiologists. The funds may only be used for the costs authorized in Utah Code § 53F-7-203 and for the types of activities which are set forth below.

[Utah Code § 53F-7-203\(2\) \(2024\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-629-3\(4\) \(August 7, 2024\)](#)

The paid professional hours provided with this state funding shall provide educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well-rounded education and to meet the challenging state academic standards and may include activities that:

1. improve and increase an educator’s:
 - a. knowledge of the academic subjects the educator teaches;
 - b. time to plan and prepare daily lessons based on student needs;
 - c. understanding of how students learn; and
 - d. ability to analyze student work and achievement from multiple sources, including how to adjust instructional strategies, assessments, and materials based on the analysis;
2. are an integral part of broad school-wide and District-wide educational improvement plans;
3. allow personalized plans for each educator to address the educator’s specific needs identified in observation or other feedback;
4. advance educator understanding of:
 - a. effective and evidence-based instructional strategies; and
 - b. strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of educators;
5. are aligned with, and directly related to, academic goals of the school or District;
6. as determined between an educator and principal, use qualifying time for professional learning that follows a comprehensive evidence-based approach to improving an educator’s effectiveness in raising student achievement including trainings, conferences, seminars, workshops, and coursework that is not related to requirements for a degree from an institution of higher education; and
7. include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice.

Paid professional hours may also include expenses an educator incurs for professional learning, including registration fees, travel related expenses at the allowable rates established by the Division of Finance under Utah Code § 63A-3-106

and Utah Code § 63A-3-107, required materials, and hourly pay for qualifying time equivalent to the educator's contracted hourly rate in the most recent school year.

[Utah Code § 53F-7-203\(4\) \(2024\)](#)

Each educator who desires to use paid professional hours funded by the State Board of Education shall:

1. On or before September 30, create a plan in consultation with the educator's principal on how the educator plans to use the paid professional hours; and
2. Before the end of a given fiscal year, provide a written statement to the educator's principal of how the educator used the paid professional hours.

If an educator begins employment after September 30, the educator may still qualify for paid professional hours. The paid professional hours may be prorated according to the portion of the school year that the educator is employed.

[Utah Code § 53F-7-203\(5\) \(2024\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-629-3\(4\)\(c\) \(August 7, 2024\)](#)

Previous Revision: 4 February 1998