

**Polk County School Board  
Bartow, Florida**

**District Professional Development System  
2006 - 2007**

**“Ensuring rigorous, relevant learning experiences  
that result in high achievement for our students.”**

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## Preface

The last several years have brought significant changes to the educational system of Florida. These changes have focused on increasing quality in all aspects of the educational process especially as they relate to improving student achievement. The focus now is on the development attitudes and practices that foster cooperation as well as competition, and attitudes that promote positive interaction and communication that results in improved performance of our students. The emphasis is now placed on administrators and teachers monitoring their progress toward meeting high expectations for academic learning gains of all students and setting priorities for professional growth that relate to student achievement data, school improvement plan goals/objectives and assessed staff needs. A significant emphasis is placed on the application of strategies to ensure that all students are making learning gains and to encourage staff to work with their peers and parents to support the learning process that targets that outcome.

**Enhanced student performance is dependent on the implementation of a professional development system that fosters student learning. It requires careful planning, a collaborative effort by teachers and administrators, and the application of professional development through inservice activities that is relevant to the needs of our students and the needs of teachers.** It is imperative that a learning system be developed and implemented that best meets the diverse needs of the students and teachers. Improvement in the performance of staff and students requires a process that integrates strategies for school improvement, staff assessment, professional growth experiences and specific student achievement initiatives. From this perspective, focused communication between teacher and administrator is critical. This communication must be centered on student achievement and the teacher's role in applying interventions based on their participation in professional development activities that are linked to performance criteria for effectiveness and to student achievement data. Therefore, the staff of the Professional Development Department [PD], in collaboration with the district Professional Development Coordinating Council [PDCC] and the Professional Development Advisory Board [PDAB], has developed this description of a system for professional development for Polk County Schools that integrates all appropriate sub-systems so as to articulate the manner in which these systems work in concert to enhance student achievement. The primary elements (or sub-systems) of the professional development system for the district are:

- **The District Mission and Strategic Plan Goals**
- **Strategic Plan Strategies and Action Plan/Benchmarks**
- **The School Improvement Planning Process (SIP)**
- **Leadership for Educational Achievement and Development (LEAD)**
- **District Master Inservice Plan (MIP)**
- **Teacher and Administrator Assessment Systems**

Each of these elements is integrated with the other and they all focus on the improvement of student performance.

## **Introduction**

This document provides a summary narrative for the Professional Development System for Polk County Schools. The “system” is made up of several sub-systems as noted in the Preface. This narrative is intended to summarize the manner in which the component sub-systems interrelate. Each component of the larger system operates in relation to the others based on a systems view of professional development and its impact on student performance. That is, teacher/administrator performance impacts student performance; engagement in meaningful professional development experiences linked directly to student needs and school-wide performance data, impacts teacher/administrator performance in a positive way; therefore, engagement by teachers/administrators in meaningful professional development experiences linked directly to student needs and school-wide performance data, has a positive impact on student performance. Each of the sub-systems contributes to the district’s goal of enhanced student achievement. The narrative provided on the pages that follow describes the interrelationships among the sub-systems that make up the district’s Professional Development System.

The description is organized to reflect the district’s ongoing effort to align its professional development practices to the Florida Department of Education Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol Standards adopted in 2002.

**Design a Professional Development System  
Aligned and Linked with Student and Instructional Personnel Needs,  
Based on Student Achievement Data Sources**

The content of the **District Mission and Strategic Plan Goals** provide emphatic statements that identify the intent to enhance learning gains for students.

## **District Mission Statement**

*The Mission of Polk County Public Schools is to ensure rigorous, relevant learning experiences that result in high achievement for our students.*

### **Benchmark Goals for Polk Vision**

1. **Kindergarten readiness – Increase by 3% Annually (2005 Baseline 76%)**
2. **10<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Proficiency – Increase by 3% Annually (2005 Baseline 26%)**
3. **Graduation rate – Increase by 3% Annually (2005 Baseline 71.6%)**

### **Strategic Plan Specific Component/Strategy Areas**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <b>Clear School/District Mission</b>  | 5. <b>Instructional Leadership</b>     |
| 2. <b>Opportunity to Learn</b>           | 6. <b>Safe and Orderly Environment</b> |
| 3. <b>High Expectations</b>              | 7. <b>Stakeholder Partnerships</b>     |
| 4. <b>Monitoring of Student Progress</b> |  |

The **District Mission and Strategic Plan** provides the impetus for School Improvement Plan development and the related specific goals for each school. In addition, individual staff members may prepare goals linked directly or indirectly to the **District Mission and Strategic Plan**. The **School Board** priorities are focused on the seven specific strategic areas. Five of these areas target student achievement, issues of curriculum, instruction and assessment, and professional development.

**School Improvement Planning Procedures** require that the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for each school focus on academics and student achievement. Each SIP must have an instructional focus. It is expected that each school identify measurable objectives linked directly to the District Mission and Strategic Plan Goals, Strategies and Benchmarks, and that each SIP define adequate progress annually for each goal in terms of student performance/achievement. Information contained in Annual School Reports is included in the SIP process and each school must build staff professional development into its SIP based on assessed staff needs and an analysis of varied student achievement data at the school site and classroom level. SIP development focuses on Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) initiatives related to the federal “No Child Left Behind” legislation. AYP initiatives target student achievement, classroom level disaggregated data analysis by varied sub-groups, and relevant professional development variables.

Both the **Teacher Assessment System** and the **Administrative Quality Performance Appraisal System** as described in the district's **LEAD Plan [Leadership for Educational Achievement and Development]** are aligned with student and instructional staff needs and include mechanisms for parental and staff input where appropriate. The **Teacher Assessment System** identifies eight Essential Performance Criteria, tied directly to the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, and Student Performance, on which each teacher is assessed annually. All teachers must complete a self-assessment related to the Essential Performance Criteria. Information from that self-assessment and the summary assessment made by the school administrator, combined with student performance data of the students the teacher is teaching, is used as one of the variables in the creation of an **Individual Professional Growth Plan (IPGP)**.

**The Individual Professional Growth Plan (IPGP)** is prepared by each teacher in collaboration with the school administrator and each IPGP focuses on the application of professional growth interventions tied to student performance data for the students assigned to the teacher, the **School Improvement Plan**, and **Teacher Assessment System** data. Professional development activities will also relate to certification needs, interests of the teacher and legislative mandates.

School Principals are assessed in relation to the **School Improvement Plan** goals, objectives and strategies as described in the **LEAD Plan [Leadership for Educational Achievement and Development]**. They are also assessed in relation to eight Essential Performance Criteria for Principals, which embody the nineteen Florida Principal Competencies (FPC) and Florida Leadership Standards. In 2007-2008, the Florida Leadership Standards will replace the FPCs to ensure alignment of district leadership assessment processes with the Florida Department of Education rules currently under development. Student achievement and professional development are at the "heart" of those new standards. A special focus within each of these eight criteria is placed on the manner in which each of the criteria relates to student achievement and/or instructional improvement. School Principals and other administrators are provided professional development and ongoing coaching related to the application of all district performance assessment procedures, methodologies for aligning and improving curriculum, assessment and instruction. Special emphasis is also placed on assessment data collection and analysis.

The **District Master Inservice Plan** has been developed to reflect the Florida Department of Education Protocol Standards. Each of the 66 standards in that protocol is applied in the development of a comprehensive professional development plan to support school improvement initiatives at the school site and district-wide. Starting in the 2007-2008 school year a formal analysis of data from the district's personnel assessment systems at the school level will be built into the comprehensive needs assessment designed to identify priority focus areas, goals and components that make up the central elements of the **District Master Inservice Plan**.

Currently this needs assessment includes priorities derived from teacher perceptions in terms of their needs and interests related to a variety of professional development issues. That needs assessment also includes teacher identification of their perceived strengths and developmental needs in relation to the 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices. It also addresses professional development issues related to numerous variables linked to the planning, delivery, follow-up and evaluation. The **Master Inservice Plan**, when combined with the **District Mission and Strategic Plan Goals, School Improvement Planning Process** and personnel assessment systems, is viewed as an essential element of a professional development system designed to enhance student performance/achievement.

## **Primary Focus of Inservice Activities Included in the System**

The **District Mission and Strategic Plan** provides a focus on just what the essential student learning outcomes must encompass. Each of the **Strategies** is designed to support systems and processes to promote the Sunshine State Standards (subject area content standards and benchmarks) and other relevant workforce standards. **Action Plan/Benchmarks** provide a map for strategy implementation. **Action Plans/Benchmarks** relate directly to student achievement, staff performance and professional growth and are tied directly to the following:

- **Clear School/District Mission**
- **High Expectations**
- **Instructional Leadership**
- **Monitoring of Student Progress**
- **Opportunity to Learn**
- **Safe and Orderly Environment**
- **Stakeholder Partnerships**

District **School Improvement** planning procedures require that each school integrate technology into its SIP and incorporate discipline strategies and other specified initiatives into its SIP goals. Each school is expected to report on its status specifically related to student achievement as measured by the FCAT and other standardized test measures and then to identify objectives, strategies and an evaluation component related to that student achievement data. These initiatives focus specifically on AYP variables.

**Assessment criteria** for both teachers and administrators include variables related to the application of educational research to improve curriculum, assessment and instruction, content knowledge and teaching methodology, classroom management, technology and monitoring of student progress through the application of assessment and data analysis. The **LEAD Plan [Leadership for Educational Achievement and Development]** outlines the training expectations and processes for Principals and other administrators that must be related to the seven major functions of the principalship, district leadership competencies and the Florida Principal Competencies (Florida Leadership Standards).

In the **District Master Inservice Plan**, the following twelve (12) areas are delineated for professional development focus for the 2006-2007 school year:

- Alignment of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction to Subject Area Standards
- Reading - Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, Reading in the Content Area
- Math
- Science
- Classroom Management
- Assessment and Data Analysis
- Diversity Issues
- The Development of Learning Communities

- Differentiated Instruction and other Research-based Instructional Strategies Designed to Engage the Learner
- Application of Instructional and Support Technology
- Management and Leadership Development
- Transition To Teaching

Each focus area is linked directly to the following variables:

- Student Achievement Data
- District Mission and Strategic Plan Goals
- School Improvement Plans
- Individual Professional Growth Plans
- State and Federal Mandates

Specific priorities for improvement have been identified from those focus areas, the District Strategic Plan Goals and the FDOE Professional Development System Evaluation Protocol Standards Audit conducted in 2004-2005. Measurement Indicators and Measurement Instruments are included in Section 8- MIP Evaluation and Accountability.

**Districts Must Require Principals to Establish and Maintain  
Individual Professional Development Plans  
for Each Instructional Employee**

The **District Mission and Strategic Plan Objectives** contain specific statements that relate to the concept of establishing a relationship between student achievement and ongoing, continuous professional growth. *“The Mission of Polk County Public Schools is to ensure rigorous, relevant learning experiences that result in high achievement for our students.”*

The **School Improvement Planning Procedures** require that staff professional development activities be built into strategies related to SIP goals/objectives.

It is in the **Teacher Assessment System** that this professional development system’s requirement is most significantly addressed. Each teacher, in collaboration with the School Principal/Administrative Team must develop and maintain an **Individual Professional Growth Plan (IPGP)**. This plan must relate directly to student performance data for the students to which the teacher is assigned, the School Improvement Plan, and to a self-assessment on the Essential Performance Criteria and/or the administrator’s summary assessment. Professional growth goals must be prepared after the preceding variables have been addressed. In the IPGP process, the teacher identifies a specific student performance data element(s), analyzes student performance data pertaining to that element(s), identifies related and relevant student learning needs, identifies student performance goals and the related measures for student learning related to those goals.

The teacher and administrator develop an evaluation component for determining the degree to which the identified goals were achieved. They also agree on professional development content and delivery mechanisms that will be a part of the plan. Specific objectives are broadly identified related to both the acquisition and application of appropriate knowledge, skill(s) and mental models, and the teacher and administrator identify the specific follow-up strategies that will be applied to assure application of the knowledge, skill(s) or mental model in the classroom and school. Detailed specific objectives are described in the MIP Component or delineated in the professional development materials provided to the participants. The administrator and teacher also determine the degree to which the training intervention(s) impacted the predicted student performance and make adjustments in the process accordingly. Teachers must provide a statement of how they have implemented the learning they derived from the professional development in which they engaged and identify their perception concerning the impact of the professional development on the achievement of their students.

**Individual Professional Development Plans  
for Instructional Personnel  
Must Include the Following:**

- **Inservice needs that are clearly related to specific student performance data for those students assigned to the teacher**
- **Clearly defined professional development objectives (Typically delineated in the MIP Component)**
- **Specific measurable improvements in student performance resulting from the training activity**
- **Evaluation component that determines the effectiveness of plan in terms of student achievement and/or transfer of knowledge, skills, etc. into classroom practice**

In Polk County, it would be inappropriate to use the label “Professional Development Plan” for the process as described in state law, due to the negative connotation that the label has had in relationship to the district’s teacher assessment process for more than twenty years. A Professional Development Plan (PDP) in our system is used when a teacher has been judged as being ineffective or in need of significant improvement related to one or more of the Essential Performance Criteria. Therefore, our district has selected the label “**Individual Professional Growth Plan**” (IPGP) in meeting this requirement. That label has a positive meaning to district personnel and is based on the concept of continuous quality improvement that most district personnel view as a beneficial mental model.

The **Individual Professional Growth Plan (IPGP)** description for the instructional personnel for the 2006-2007 school year is located on page 20 of the **Teacher Assessment System** handbook and the **IPGP** forms (Parts I, II and III) are located in Appendix D.

**Inservice Activities for School Administrative Personnel  
Related to Effective School Management and Instructional Leadership**

The district's **Master Inservice Plan** describes numerous specific training components that address content related to effective school management and instructional leadership issues. Some of the more significant components are listed as follows:

Administrator Technology Proficiency Level I
Administrator Technology Proficiency Level II
Administrator Technology Proficiency Level III
K-12 Reading for Administrators
Advanced Coaching
Developing Learning Communities
Title I School Improvement Planning
Continuous Improvement Model
Ethical Leadership
Leading In A Diverse School Setting
Appraisal/Assessment Training- School Improvement/Professional Growth
Interaction Management Skills
Targeted Selection Interview Training
FLIGHT 5- PEC/EAP For Leaders
Aspiring Leaders Portfolio Processes
Aspiring Leaders Seminar
Applying The Florida Leadership Standards
Analytical Decision-Making
Developing Quality School Improvement Plans
Developing Positive School and Workplace Culture
Designing and Implementing Meaningful Staff Development
Leadership Portfolio Development
Management Skills For Leaders
Technical/Function Skills Training For School-Based Leaders
Assessment and Data Analysis For School Improvement
Data Analysis For Instructional Staff
District Testing Program

In addition there are several Master Inservice Plan components that address specific instructional issues that target both instructional and administrative personnel such as:

- Thinking Maps
- CRISS Training
- Kagan Cooperative Learning
- Technology Tools In Education
- DIBELS
- Varied Reading Endorsement Components
- Success For All Reading Program
- FCAT Math and Science Content
- Varied ESOL Components

The district **LEAD Plan [Leadership for Educational Achievement and Development]** describes specific job embedded professional development programs linked directly to instructional leadership issues and information from research that correlates the behavior of school leaders to enhanced student achievement. These specific programs are:

- **The Preparing New Principals Program (PNPP)** is designed to result in School Principal Certification for participants prior to assuming the position of school principal. [Principal Intern Program]
- **The Interim Principal Program (IPP)** is designed to allow for complete documentation of the Florida Educational Leadership Standards and training comprehensive of all the duties of the principalship for members of the principal pool, who are PNPP participants, and who are appointed to a principalship prior to finishing the PNP processes. The IPP process is also designed for other persons from outside the district who have not participated in the PNPP process, and can be applied to certify district level administrators who are members of the Principal Pool as may be appropriate, and/or to certify out-of-state experienced principals.
- **The Professional Development Program for New Principals (PDPNP)** is designed to equip new principals, who have School Principal Certification, with essential success skills for leading a school during their first year in the job role.
- **The Technical Skills Development Program for Experienced Assistant Principals (TSDEAP)** is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of Assistant Principals who are not participants in the district **Preparing New Principals Program (PNPP)**.
- **The Professional Development Program for New Assistant Principals (PDPNAP)** is designed to equip new assistant principals with essential knowledge and survival skills for success in their first year in the assistant principal role.
- **The Aspiring Leaders Program (ALP)** is a district program for professional development that is designed to prepare participants for the potential role in

the position of assistant principal and to assist them with application procedures related to pool placement.

- **The Orientation and Recruitment Program for Leadership Development (ORPLD)** provides orientation information to personnel in the district who may be interested in pursuing a leadership role in the future.

## **District Master Inservice Plan Meets All Requirements**

As stated on page five of this document, the **District Master Inservice Plan** has been developed to reflect the Florida Department of Education Protocol Standards. Each of the 66 standards in that protocol is applied in the development of a comprehensive professional development plan to support school improvement initiatives at the school site and district-wide. An analysis of student achievement data and data from the district's personnel assessment systems is built into the comprehensive needs assessment designed to identify priority focus areas, goals and components that make up the central elements of the **District Master Inservice Plan**. District MIP components relate to one or more of the following State Focus Areas for Professional Development:

- Reading Programs
- Sunshine State Standards, Subject Content
- Teaching Methods
- Technology
- Assessment and Data Analysis
- Classroom Management
- School Safety
- Parental Involvement
- Leadership Development

This plan is updated annually by PD staff in collaboration with specific shareholder groups and submitted to the School Board for approval. During the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years, each of the components in the MIP was reviewed and re-written in a format consistent with the FDOE PDS Evaluation Protocol Standards. In addition, obsolete components have been deleted and new components were written to meet new professional development needs related to student learning and staff performance in the district. This process is applied annually as well as through the routine five-year complete update process of the MIP.

## **Budget Allocations for Professional Development**

Current Florida statutes eliminated categorical funding for professional development in 2006. The district funded professional development for 2006-2007 at a level equivalent to what would have been categorically funded by the state if it had chosen to do so. The Florida Department of Education has identified specific Professional Development Focus Areas related to budget allocations and budget monitoring for professional development as follows:

- Sunshine State Standards, Subject Content and Teaching Methods
- Technology
- Assessment and Data Analysis
- Classroom Management
- School Safety
- Parental Involvement
- Leadership Development

Specific funding allocation information for 2006-2007 is described in a separate PD Budget document.

PD staff collaborated with staff from the Finance Department to develop a system that is applied to allocate and track expenditures for professional development according to these focus areas for school allocations for professional development.

In addition to the allocation from local funds, money is secured from other multiple funding sources for professional development related to the following: Title I, Title II, Title V, Reading First, IDEA, FDLRS, Perkins, School Lottery Enhancement Funds, Numerous School Grants, etc. Those funds are allocated under the jurisdiction of several district departments and individual schools and target each of the state focus areas for professional development.

## **Methods for Determining Professional Development Needs**

The **District Master Inservice Plan**, Section 3, describes the methods used to determine district professional development needs. The Professional Development Coordinating Council (PDCC) served as an action team for conducting the needs assessment process. The needs assessment is conducted formally every two years. The PDCC has identified the following data sources for its analysis:

- District-Wide Student Achievement Data
- Teacher generated student performance data linked to IPGP process
- School-wide Student Achievement Data disaggregated by class, content, skills
- Individual School Improvement Plans
- Personnel data- performance appraisal process, job descriptions, demographic data, etc.
- District developed priorities
- Federal, state and local mandates
- Department or unit goals
- Personal aspirations of employees

A variety of data collection methods are applied that included the following:

- Analysis of **School Improvement Plans**
- Review of existing data, e.g., **performance appraisal results at the school level**
- Interaction with shareholder focus groups
- Interviews with selected staff
- Analysis of statutes, district priorities, etc.
- Analysis of teacher demographic data
- School-level staff surveys

The following general focus areas are delineated for professional growth for the 2006 - 2007 school year:

- Student Achievement- Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), Goal 3 Standards and Sunshine State Standards- Reading, Math & Science
- The Development of Learning Communities
- Alignment of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction
- Application of Instructional and Support Technology
- Assessment and Data Analysis for School Improvement

These focus areas are consistent with the district's **Mission, Strategic Plan Goals, Strategies and Benchmarks**.

Also, specific professional growth needs have been identified for teachers as a result of implementing and maintaining their **Individual Professional Growth Plans** and those plans are a significant and relevant data source for inservice needs assessment processes.

### **Target Audiences Identified**

The following Inservice Areas and Corresponding Target Audiences have been identified for the 2006 - 2007 school year. They were identified as a result of the process of preparing Individual Professional Growth Plans as described in the **Teacher Assessment System** and conducting the professional development needs assessment related to the development of the **District Master Inservice Plan**.

<u>Inservice Area</u>	<u>Target Audience</u>
Sunshine State Standards, Subject Content, Teaching Methods	Classroom Teachers, School Principals Assistant Principals, District Staff, Substitute Teachers, Paraprofessionals
Technology	Classroom Teachers, Administrators, Paraprofessionals, Support Staff
Assessment and Data Analysis	Classroom Teachers, School Principals, Assistant Principals, District Staff
Classroom Management	Classroom Teachers, School Principals, Substitute Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Assistant Principals
School Safety	Principals, Assistant Principals, Classroom Teachers, Support Staff
Parental Involvement	Principals, Assistant Principals, Classroom Teachers, Support Staff and Parents
Leadership Development	Principals, Assistant Principals, Teachers aspiring to leadership role
Specific EPC Delineated Needs	Classroom Teachers

**Continuous Evaluation of Professional Development Programs**

As noted earlier in this document, the **Teacher Assessment System** requires the development and implementation of an Individual Professional Growth Plan (IPGP) for each teacher. One element of the IPGP is the Evaluation Component described specifically in the plan. The administrator and teacher must agree on specific method(s) to be used to determine achievement of Student Learning Goals and identify it (them) in the plan. The teacher and administrator may select from among varied methodologies for determining the specific improvement.

Also, the **District Master Inservice Plan** contains a section focusing on Evaluation of the Professional Development Program. That section describes in detail the processes related to participant assessment, component evaluation and program monitoring and evaluation. The primary focus in all three processes is on improving student performance through meaningful professional development experiences for staff and documenting that improvement through follow-up, coaching, and support as well as in relation to applied learning by the staff toward enhancement of student learning.

The district also now requires those who plan, deliver, and follow-up on professional development activities to report through the Integrated Planning and Reporting System [IPRS] for professional development to evaluate the professional development they coordinate in terms of participant use of the knowledge and skills learned as a result of participation in professional development and in terms of the impact on student achievement. This is accomplished using PD Form 004 and is required for credit to be awarded to participants.

The district is using student achievement data as a routine method for evaluating the impact of programs and professional development on student learning. Processes are also implemented to ensure fidelity of implementation related to all significant professional development interventions being used in schools district-wide.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the Professional Development System for the Polk County School District is essentially the integrated and reciprocal interaction of elements of six major sub-systems...

- **The District Mission and Strategic Plan Goals**
- **Strategic Plan Strategies and Action Plan/Benchmarks**
- **The School Improvement Planning Process**
- **Leadership for Educational Achievement and Development (LEAD)**
- **District Master Inservice Plan**
- **Teacher and Administrator Assessment Systems**

Each of these sub-systems is integrated with the other and focuses on the improvement of student performance. Each contributes to the effective implementation of professional development processes that are designed to enhance student performance and achievement and to support the concept of **ensuring** “rigorous, relevant learning experiences that result in high achievement for our students.”