



Professional Development Policy

Revised September 2014

NDTA Professional Development Policy

Revised March 2014

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SECTION 1 GENERAL

1.1 Definition of Professional Development (PD)

Professional Development is a continuous learning process of professional growth through active engagement in activities designed to enable teachers, both individually and collectively, to hone skills, improve practice, and stay current with changes related to teaching and learning.

1.2 Principles of Professional Development

Professional Development (PD) activities should

- a) provide opportunities for professional growth and learning;
- b) support members' needs to strive for best practice;
- c) encourage inquiry and collaboration with professional colleagues;
- d) improve teaching and learning;
- e) facilitate positive changes in professional practice.

1.3 Purposes of Professional Development

The purposes of Professional Development (PD) are to assist members in

- a) building and strengthening themselves as a body of professional teachers;
- b) enhancing professional relationships with students, parents and colleagues;
- c) developing, discussing, revising and applying educational theories;
- d) supporting innovative instructional developments;
- e) continually improving the quality of their teaching;
- f) addressing issues of professional concern.

1.4 History of Professional Development

In 1972, professional development days (non-instructional days) were added to the school calendar at the request of the teaching profession after years of advocacy from the BCTF. The inclusion increased the number of days of work for teachers with no loss of instructional days for students. Professional Developments (PD) days in the school calendar recognized that teachers, like professionals in most fields, needed time during the school year to hone their skills, improve practice, and stay current with changes related to teaching and learning.

(<http://www.bctf.ca/publications>)

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1.5 NDTA Professional Development Background

- a) The regular work year of NDTA members shall be inclusive of no fewer than five (5) non-instructional days. The allocation of these non-instructional days shall be made in accordance with Article F.20 of the Local *Collective Agreement*. In addition, a fund representing 5% of the current September teacher payroll and 0.5% of the Teachers Teaching on Call salary budget from the previous school year (as identified in the school districts' audited financial statement) shall be made available for member professional development each school year. This fund is designed to supplement the cost of PD.

Good practice around the use of professional development funds and time is the professional and union responsibility of each NDTA member (See Article F.20 of the NDTA *Collective Agreement*).

- b) Decisions about the direction, use, application and expenditure of the NDTA PD fund shall be made by NDTA members only.
- c) The NDTA PD Policy shall be reviewed by the Association membership at the end of each two-year period, beginning May 2014.
- d) Teachers Teaching on Call and Teachers on Leave shall be entitled to make application to the PD fund to the maximum of that budget line as established in the annual NDTA PD budget. Teachers who retain the right of recall shall be entitled to make application to the Association for grants from the PD Fund (see Article C.20.9 NDTA *Collective Agreement*) to the maximum of the budget line as established in the annual NDTA PD budget.

1.6 Professional Development Days

a) Provincial Specialists Association Day (PSA)

This is a province-wide professional development day on the third Friday in October each year. BCTF Provincial Specialists Association (PSA) members provide professional development opportunities on this day. NDTA members shall be encouraged to participate in these activities. Those members who are unable to do so may meet together to have professional conversations, guided by the Purposes and Principles of Professional Learning, coordinated by the NDTA PD Committee. NDTA members are expected to attend provincial or locally planned events or to have applied for an alternate professional development opportunity in accordance with Policy.

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b) NDTA District Day

An annual NDTA District-Wide Professional Development (PD) day shall be coordinated by the NDTA PD Committee. The theme of the day shall be determined by the NDTA PD Committee and shall be reflective of broad-based educational trends and/or issues. This initiative is funded by the NDTA PD Fund and NDTA members are expected to attend this event or to have applied for an alternate professional development opportunity in accordance with Policy.

c) School-Based Professional Development Days

The planning and funding of the three school-based professional development days shall be the responsibility of each school staff. All decisions should be made by the committee of the whole. Staffs may choose to collaborate with other school staffs on this day, but it is not intended for district-wide or local specialists' association functions. NDTA members are expected to attend school-based events or to have applied for an alternate professional development opportunity in accordance with Policy.

d) Additional Non-Instructional Days

Additional non-instructional days established by the Ministry of Education or the Teacher Regulation Branch are not the responsibility of NDTA members. Activities on those days are the responsibility of school or district-based administrators as designates of the Board of School Trustees.

SECTION 2 NDTA PRO-D COMMITTEES STRUCTURE

2.1 Joint NDTA / Board Professional-Development Advisory Committee

- a) According to Article F.20.6 of the NDTA *Collective Agreement*, a joint committee composed of six representatives, three from the Board, (at least one of whom shall be a Trustee) and three from the NDTA, shall be formed to act as an advisory body to the NDTA Professional Development (PD) Committee. The three NDTA members on this committee shall be the NDTA PD Chair, the President and the Vice-President of the NDTA (or designates).
- b) The function of this body shall not be that of decision making but it shall
 - i. make recommendations to the NDTA PD Committee regarding the various uses of PD funds;

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- ii. review the PD plan and budget as developed by the NDTA PD Committee for each school year;
 - iii. review the report of the PD activities conducted in each year before submission to the Board; and
 - iv. make a direct recommendation to the Superintendent on the allocation of the five non-instructional days for the subsequent school year by March 31st each year.
- c) Upon recommendation of the Joint Committee, the NDTA PD Committee shall be entitled to establish at least two (2) District days subject to the above process.
- d) The Association shall give a report to the Board twice yearly, giving an accounting of the disposition of the funds, including a summary of the activities for which the funds were disbursed.
- e) The Board shall provide the Association, by October 15th of each year, a list of the FTEs by worksite plus the Teachers Teaching on Call list.

2.2 NDTA Professional Development Committee

The Committee shall

- a) Consist of a Chair and ten other members of the Association. A balance of elementary and secondary teachers, as well as the Chair, shall be elected to this committee at the Annual General Meeting of the NDTA.
- b) Provide professional development leadership by setting goals and evaluating them annually.
- c) Administer the NDTA PD funds by establishing and monitoring an annual budget that reflects this Policy and any other professional development items deemed appropriate and feasible by the NDTA PD Committee.
- d) Designate the Chair or alternate committee member to attend meetings and training activities, within the district, zone or province, which relate directly to the enhancement of PD in the district.
- e) Plan and coordinate the NDTA District-Wide PD Day and other NDTA PD Committee sponsored activities.
- f) Make recommendations to the Association with regard to policies and procedures for PD activities.
- g) Initiate and facilitate opportunities for professional growth of members.

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- h) Act as a resource body in the areas of planning, facilities and resources for PD when requested by a special interest group or school staff.
- i) Plan and coordinate local activities for Provincial Specialist Association Day.
- j) Convene any meetings of members deemed necessary in order to discuss a PD concern(s) which pertains specifically to that group.
- k) Authorize any two of the following as signing authorities for the committee:
 - the PD Committee Chair,
 - the President of the NDTA,
 - the Vice-President of the NDTA,
 - the NDTA Office Manager.
- l) Assist School-based PD Representatives in their leadership role by providing
 - i. leadership and facilitation training in an annual PD training session;
 - ii. simplified forms to assist representatives in information gathering and dissemination;
 - iii. ongoing leadership and support through the monthly PD Representative meetings.

2.3 NDTA Professional Development Committee Chair or Designate

The Committee Chair shall

- a) Act as the spokesperson for and representative of NDTA Professional Development (PD) at BCTF PD training and/or network meetings.
- b) Ensure that the NDTA PD Policy is functional and operative.
- c) Approve and sign all NDTA PD forms.
- d) Set agendas for School-based PD Representative and NDTA PD Committee meetings.
- e) Plan and facilitate School-based PD Representative Training.
- f) Attend regular NDTA Executive Committee meetings.
- g) Write any NDTA PD reports.
- h) Carry out such planning and coordinating as directed by the NDTA PD Committee.

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2.4 NDTA School-Based Professional Development Committee

- a) Each school shall establish an NDTA School-based Professional Development (PD) Committee in September of each year. The school based PD Committee shall be comprised of NDTA members only. Committee names shall be submitted to the NDTA office by the end of September.
- b) The NDTA School-based PD Committee shall select a representative (PD Rep) to attend the monthly NDTA PD Rep meetings. See Section 2.5 for roles and responsibilities.
- c) Each School-based NDTA PD Committee shall provide school-based PD leadership by setting goals based on staff needs and evaluating them annually.
- d) Each School-based NDTA PD Committee shall organize and lead PD during the three school-based professional development days.
- e) The school PD Committee shall be responsible to administer and monitor the expenditures of any whole-school funding allocations.
- f) The school-based PD Committee shall liaise with Administrative Officer(s) to ensure that the school is closed for the approved PD activities.

2.5 NDTA School-Based Professional-Development Representative

The role of the School-Based Professional Development Representative (PD Rep) is to

- a) Act as a liaison between NDTA members of the school-based PD Committee and the NDTA PD Committee.
- b) Ensure that staffs are aware of NDTA PD Policy and that school decisions regarding PD are consistent with the NDTA PD Policy.
- c) Initiate leadership in PD planning and coordination at the site.
- d) Ensure that school-based PD decisions are discussed at a committee of the whole and that they reflect the PD wishes of the majority of the NDTA members.
- e) Inform individual members who are not attending planned events how to apply for alternate PD in accordance with Policy.
- f) Inform members throughout the year about PD, how to access information about individual and group funds, and about PD issues and opportunities.
- g) Attend monthly NDTA PD Rep meetings.

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- h) Consult with colleagues on PD matters.
- i) Submit a brief summary about school-based PD upon request.
- j) Assist NDTA members in using appropriate PD forms.
- k) Ensure that the appropriate forms are completed and submitted for allocations to Member Presenters/Facilitators.

SECTION 3 FUNDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Whole School Professional Development

Rationale: Guided by the principles and purposes of Professional Development (PD) outlined in Section 1, this funding is to assist schools in meeting their unique needs.

Funds may be combined with those from other sources. For example,

- a) With the approval of each member, their individual FTE allotment may be used to offset all or part of expenses associated with whole school PD functions (an example: each member might agree to give \$15.00 from their individual allotment to subsidize expenses for a facilitators, refreshments or rental of equipment or facilities, etc.).
- b) Members may use their individual PD funds with other members at the same site or from a different site (an example: ten members from several different schools invite an outside facilitator and debit each of their funds \$50.00).

This money is to be used for Whole-School PD only. PSA Day is not a school-based day and will not be funded within this budget.

3.1.1 Presenter Funds for School-Based PD Days

To support school-based PD, each school may apply for up to \$375 per year. Funds may be combined with those from any other source. This money is not to be used by individual teachers for individual PD activities. The appropriate application shall be completed and submitted at least three weeks prior to the event. Applications are subject to the approval of the PD Committee and to availability of funding.

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School(s) (one or more) may use this fund for:

- i. all or part of costs for out-of-district facilitator's fees/honorarium, travel and accommodations;
- ii. local facilitator's cost – (See Member Facilitator Accounts NDTA Pro-D Policy Section 4)
- iii. rental of facilities and/or equipment;

3.1.2 Refreshments

For the purposes of whole school professional development, each school will be allotted \$15 (based on \$5 per FTE per event) per FTE for light refreshments. Funding is contingent upon availability.

3.2 School Based PD Leadership Committee Release

To carry out leadership responsibilities and to champion teacher lead initiatives in PD at the school and inter-school level, members of School Based PD Committees may apply for release time, up to 5 X (0.5) days per year, to meet for planning purposes.

3.3 Individual Professional Development

Rationale: Guided by the principles and purposes of professional development (Section 1), this funding is to assist colleagues with their individual professional learning.

NDTA members may apply for all or part of the costs of professional development up to the limit of the member FTE allotment. **Each member is responsible for obtaining any required leave of absence.**

- a) NDTA members may accumulate their individual yearly allotment for three (3) years.
- b) They may also apply to use their next year's allotment in year one or year two dependent upon availability of funds.
- c) At the end of three (3) years, if unused, the funds will be reallocated for general use and the three (3) year cycle begins again.
- d) In addition, each teacher with a FTE allocation may apply for up to one day of TTOC release time per year, subject to the availability of funds.
- e) All applications for professional development funds shall be submitted to the NDTA PD Committee on the appropriate forms and should be submitted prior to or within four (4)

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months of the date of the event. Applications submitted outside of this timeframe will not be accepted or approved.

- f) If an application has been denied, the member has the right to appeal to the full NDTA PD Committee and then to the full NDTA Executive Committee.

3.4 Professional Learning Groups (PLG)

Rationale

Guided by the principles and purposes of professional development, this funding is to assist colleagues with their needs to collaborate regarding pedagogy, philosophy or grade and subject professional development initiatives.

Examples:

- Grade or subject focus group
- Collaborative group
- Book discussion group
- Inquiry group
- Local interest group
- Teaching strategy

Criteria

- a) Each group (minimum of 2 people) must submit an action plan, which will be subject to approval by the PD Committee.
- b) Teachers may combine their individual PD allotment with this initiative.
- c) Individual teachers may access this funding only once per school year. However, they may participate in more than one PLG.
- d) As per PD Policy Section 5.2, examples of activities that are NOT funded under this policy are: job specific training, job-related duties, extra-curricular activities, lesson planning, ministry accountability processes and school as business initiatives.
- e) Successful applicants will be required to submit a short report about their PLG (goals, activities, conclusions) by the second Friday in June.

3.5 NEW: Professional Learning Partnerships

Rationale

Guided by the principles and purposes of professional development, this funding is to provide TTOC coverage to two colleagues to collaborate and to act as mentors or critical friends to fully develop, explore and assess their plan.

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Criteria

- a) Each partnership (2 people) must submit an action plan, which will be subject to approval by the PD Committee.
- b) Each partnership may access two (2) release days per person per year to a maximum of four (4) release days total. The release time must be used by May 31st of each year.
- c) Individual teachers may access this funding only once per school year.
- d) As per PD Policy Section 5.2, examples of activities that are NOT funded under this policy are: job specific training, job-related duties, extra-curricular activities, ministry accountability processes and school as business initiatives.
- e) Successful applicants will be required to submit a short report about their Professional Partnership (goals, activities, conclusions) by the second Friday in June.

3.6 National/International Conferences: Individual Pro-D

Teachers may be supported annually for attendance at a conference offering a national or international perspective. Applications are subject to availability of funding.

Criteria:

- a) Interested teachers will complete and submit an application for all or part of costs associated with such a conference up to \$1000.
- b) There will be two (2) awards of \$1000 each.
- c) A committee consisting of at least three members of the Professional Development Committee, including the Chair, will consider the applications before awarding the funds.
- d) Individual PD funds may also be used to offset national/international conference costs.
- e) The successful applicants will be obliged to share their newly gained knowledge and insights with colleagues in a formal setting such as PSA or District Day within one (1) year of the conference.
- f) A teacher will only be eligible for this funding once in five years.
- g) Deadline for applications: December 31st of each year.

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SECTION 4 FACILITATOR ACCOUNTS

- 4.1 NDTA members who facilitate a **full day** professional development for their colleagues are entitled to 1.5 TTOC release days or the dollar equivalent in a facilitator account. The rationale for the allocation is 0.5 to prepare the presentation and 1.0 to compensate for the loss of your own professional development. Co-facilitators must share the entitlement.
- 4.2 NDTA members who facilitate a **half-day** professional development for their colleagues are entitled to 1.0 TTOC release day or the dollar equivalent in a facilitator account. The rationale for the 1.0 is, 0.5 to prepare for your presentation and 0.5 to compensate for the loss of your professional development. Co-facilitators must share the entitlement.
- 4.3 The TTOC release day(s) owed to member presenters will be the fiscal responsibility of the group who requested the activity (school-based PD committee, the NDTA PD Committee, Professional Learning Group). In other words, it is up to the group organizing the PD to inform and allocate particulars to the facilitators and to the NDTA PD Committee.
- 4.4 To qualify for Facilitator funds sessions should have a minimum of ten (10) people. Smaller groups may be approved upon application.
- 4.5 The NDTA Professional Development Committee will maintain records of facilitator accounts.
- 4.6 These funds are for use for professional development only as per Section 5 of this Policy.
- 4.7 Application must be made on the appropriate form prior to the PD.
- 4.8 The TTOC release day or the dollar equivalent must be used within three years of the event.

SECTION 5 FUNDING CRITERIA

5.1 Examples of Funded Pro-D

Guided by the purposes and principles of professional development, funded examples include:

- workshops
- conferences
- seminars
- classroom visits
- special interest discussion groups
- collaborative learning groups
- any courses that do NOT contribute to an increase in the member's salary or certification

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- Professional Association fees
- Professional materials including:
 - ✓ professional journals
 - ✓ professional books
- ✓ professional videos
- ✓ professional audio tapes
- ✓ professional software (instructional packages only)

Costs may include:

- registration fees
- release time
- travel (out of District only)
- accommodation (out of District only)
- meals (out of District only)
- mileage (out of District only and at the current BCTF rate)
- parking costs

Travel and accommodation costs shall be based upon the most economical alternatives available.

5.2 Examples Not Funded Under This Policy

Guided by the purposes and principles of professional development, non-funded examples include:

- student instructional materials
 - learning resources
 - Canada Revenue Agency taxable benefits or allowances (benefit the employee more than the employer)
 - ✓ courses that contribute to an increase in the member's salary or certification
 - Job specific training and/or duties - employer's responsibility to provide time and in-service
 - ✓ training in how to use school systems
 - ✓ student information systems
 - ✓ training in how to interface with other Ministries
 - ✓ report cases of child abuse
 - ✓ training in job-related
 - ✓ health and safety issues, such as how to conduct an earthquake drill
 - blackline masters
 - equipment
 - ✓ gym memberships
 - ✓ personal travel
 - ✓ fees for personal hobbies.
 - ✓ mandated Ministry of Education or College of Teachers initiatives.
 - ✓ Marking
 - ✓ writing report cards
 - ✓ filing
 - ✓ organizing/ordering classroom materials and/or equipment
 - ✓ lesson preparation.
- Extra-curricular activities - voluntary choices of members
 - ✓ coaching teams
 - ✓ travel with student dance troupes, bands, and choirs

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- ✓ travel to other venues for student tournaments, contests and performances etc. (NOTE: members traveling with students to other venues may use professional development funds to attend accredited courses, providing they have been relieved of any supervisory role for any of the attending students.)

- Ministry accountability processes - The Ministry of Education Implementation Day may be used to support teachers with these processes. This is not to be confused with staff-determined, school-based goal setting. The latter can be funded professional development providing it is a decision of the committee of the whole and adheres to this policy. School-based accountability funds exist to support professional development initiatives resulting from the accountability process. These funds should be exhausted before members consider using NDTA Professional Development funds for follow-up, school-based professional development activities.

- School as a Business initiatives are not funded.
 - ✓ Use of school based or personal Pro-D to develop an entrepreneurial program that would generate funds for the school or district.
 - ✓ Administrative request to use part of a Pro-D day to look at how to make the school more “attractive” to international students.
 - ✓ Use of school based days or Pro-D funds to develop a plan to market your school or to attract students, which would compensate for declining enrolment.
 - ✓ Development of lessons, programs, workshops, etc. that could be sold for profit (personal, school, district)