

## Professional Growth

- 3.13 Program Objectives - The San Luis Obispo County Office of Education and C.S.E.A. Chapter #444, through support of this program shall encourage continued and active participation on the part of all permanent classified, non-management employees. Professional Growth is the purposeful engagement of study and related activities designed to improve service to the County Office of Education and the personal development of the employee.
- 3.14 Professional Growth Review Committee
- 3.14.1 Composition - A Professional Growth Review Committee shall be composed of six (6) members, three (3) of whom shall be classified employees appointed by the Association. Three (3) members shall be management and appointed by the County Superintendent or designee. The Chief Human Resources Officer shall serve as a permanent member of the committee and resource person. The committee shall elect a chairperson.
- 3.14.2 Term - The members of the review committee shall serve a minimum two (2) year term with one half (1/2) of the committee appointed each year.
- 3.14.3 Duties
- a. To serve as a review and appeal committee.
  - b. To prepare and revise all necessary forms and timelines for the Professional Growth Program.

## Qualifications and Procedures for Obtaining Increment Credit

- 3.15 Eligibility for Participation in the Program - All permanent classified, non-management employees of the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education are eligible to participate. Employees must have gained permanence in a bargaining unit job classification.
- 3.16 Fifteen (15) points of Professional Growth credit must be earned to obtain one (1) Professional Growth increment. Professional Growth activity points must have been earned after an employee's permanent employment with the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education. No employee may receive more than six (6) increments during his/her period of employment.
- 3.17 Employees must submit their documentation on an ongoing, yearly basis regardless of whether they qualify for an incremental increase at that time. An incremental increase will be awarded once 15 points have been accumulated. Accumulation of 15 points may occur in one year or over the course of several years. Points will not be awarded for activity from previous years unless submitted in the year in which they are earned according to the Professional Growth timeline.

3.18 As all courses may not qualify for Professional Growth credit, employees must first submit course information to their immediate supervisor for review and approval. Once the immediate supervisor has reviewed and approved the course, employees are required to obtain prior approval from the Human Resources Department 20 days prior to the start date of the course. The Human Resources Department will have 10 working days from the date the request is received to determine if the course qualifies. Employees who do not follow the course approval timeline run the risk of having the course denied for approval by the Professional Growth Committee.

3.19 Methods by which Increments may be awarded:

3.19.1 All coursework must be relevant to the employee's current position as outlined in the job description or for one for which the employee is training.

3.19.2 Coursework designed to improve service to the SLOCOE *and* the personal development of the employee.

3.19.3 The course is required for a degree program appropriate to service in the employee's current position.

3.19.4 The course goes towards an associate degree in a job-related field that must be obtained as a result of either a state or federal requirement (for example, an instructional aide pursuing an AA degree as a result of the paraprofessional requirements of No Child Left Behind Act).

3.19.5 All employees taking courses must obtain a grade of "C" or better. When a course only offers a "Pass or Fail" or a "Credit or No Credit", a Pass or Credit must be earned. College coursework, including online courses, must be verified and taken through an accredited institution. (i.e., Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education) An official transcript or official grade card must verify grade, unit or hours, and completion date.

3.19.6 Credit for appropriate courses will be as follows:

<u>Semester Units</u>	<u>Points Earned</u>
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

<u>Quarter Units</u>	<u>Points Earned</u>
1	.66
2	1.32
3	2.00

4	2.64
5	3.30

*15 hours of workshops/seminars, online or physical attendance, is the equivalent of 1 semester unit.*

3.19.7 Professional Growth points will not be given for the following:

- a. Exams, Challenged Courses, or Work Experience
- b. Points will not be granted when the participation is during the employee's regular working hours.
- c. Coursework previously approved and awarded points.

3.19.8 Points will be reinstated under the following circumstances:

- a. Employee is reinstated to a position with the County Office of Education within a 39-month rehire period.
- b. Employee resumes activities with the Professional Growth Program after taking a break from active participation.
- c. Employees returning from a leave of absence from the County Office of Education.

3.19.9 Professional Growth Increment:

- a. In order to be awarded one (1) increment, a total of fifteen (15) points must be earned. Each increment awarded constitutes one (1) 2.5% salary increase.
- b. No more than one (1) increment (15 points) can be awarded in a given year. However, any employee who has accumulated more than fifteen (15) points in the Professional Growth Awards Program will not lose the extra points. The points over fifteen (15) will be carried over, added to any additional points awarded in future years, and applied to another incremental increase once the total points accumulated again reach 15 points.
- c. The cap on Professional Growth increments/points earned while participating in the program will be six (6) increments or ninety (90) points total.

3.19.10 Process for Participation in the Professional Growth Program: - An employee who wishes to participate in the Professional Growth Program must submit their documentation to the Human Resources Department according to the following timeline:

*Ongoing* - Course approval forms may be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

Submission of Course Pre-Approval Form to immediate supervisor and Human Resources Department must occur 20 days prior to the course start date.

Employees will receive notification of course approval within 10 working days of receipt of the Course Approval Form in the Human Resources Department.

*Spring* - Professional Growth Forms sent to all permanent classified employees

*Summer* - Applications reviewed by Professional Growth Committee and recommendations are given to the Chief Human Resources Officer.

*September 1* - Effective date for approved incremental increases. Incremental increases will be reflected on the September End of Month payroll.