

ARTICLE 19 - PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW PROGRAM

Section 1. Intent and Purpose

The legislative purpose of the California Peer Assistance and Review Program for Teachers ("PAR") is to improve the education of students by improving the classroom performance of teachers. This Article is intended to implement the programmatic and funding requirements of PAR, effective July 1, 2000 as they relate to veteran teachers, and also to continue, within the funding framework of PAR, the support services for beginning teachers provided the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program and the new Pre-Intern Program. The provisions of this article shall be applicable to any implementation by the District of PAR, but shall not compel the District to implement or fund PAR to any extent greater than the State's funding level. In the event that PAR funding is "block granted" by the State, the District reduction in PAR expenditures shall not be greater than the proportionate State reduction of overall funding for the programs with which it is "blocked."

Section 2. Peer Assistance and Review Panel

There shall be a District-wide joint teacher-administrator Peer Assistance and Review Panel ("the Panel") comprised of the Association President or designee, four other permanent classroom teachers to be selected by the Association, and four administrators to be selected by the Superintendent. Of the teachers on the Panel, at least two shall be from the elementary level and two from secondary. As to the administrators, two shall be from the elementary level and two from secondary.

Panel Members shall serve three-year renewable terms staggered for purposes of continuity. Any administrator assigned by the District to coordinate the PAR Program activities shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Panel to assist in implementing and communicating the Panel's actions, and to act as liaison to District management. Teacher members of the Panel shall conduct business on a paid released time basis, or at the District-initiated Special Projects hourly rate for work outside instructional time, and shall receive mileage reimbursement for required travel within the District for PAR business.

The functions of the Panel shall be:

- a. Selection of Consulting Teachers, at the conclusion of a selection process which includes classroom observation (by one or more members of the Panel) of final applicants. The Panel shall also be responsible for reviewing the consulting assignments of the Consulting Teachers, assessing the effectiveness of each Consulting Teacher and determining renewal/non-renewal of Consulting Teacher terms of service. The Panel shall elect its chair who shall schedule and preside over Panel meetings. The Panel may also establish operating rules and procedures, consistent with this Article. The Panel shall operate by consensus in making all decisions, but if a consensus is not possible may act by majority vote of those present;
- b. Annual review and evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of the PAR program, the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program, and the Pre Intern Program, and submission to the Board of Education of recommendations for improvement of such Programs. This process may include interviews or surveys of program participants;
- c. Review peer assistance reports prepared by Consulting Teachers; and

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- d. Make reports and recommendations to the Superintendent and Board of Education regarding the progress of the referred participants in the PAR Program, including a confidential report (as required by law) to the Superintendent and Board of Education of the name(s) of any referred teachers who have not demonstrated satisfactory progress within the year following referral. Any such report shall be treated as confidential, and shall not itself serve as the factual or legal basis for any further proceedings or be admissible in any termination proceedings, unless the teacher asserts that he or she has not received adequate assistance or support.

Section 3. Selection Criteria for Consulting Teachers

In selecting Consulting Teachers the PAR Panel shall consider applicants who are credentialed permanent classroom teachers with substantial recent experience in classroom instruction, including at least three years' such experience with the District. Selection shall be based upon the candidates' academic preparation, teaching and mentoring experience, demonstrated exemplary teaching ability, subject matter knowledge, communication and interpersonal skills, organizational skills, and the mastery of teaching strategies necessary to meet the needs of pupils in varying contexts. Final candidates shall be observed by Panel member(s) in the classroom setting. Transcripts of college and graduate work, letters of recommendation and prior performance evaluations shall also be considered. Members of the Panel are ineligible to apply for Consulting Teacher while serving on the Panel, and Consulting Teachers while so serving shall not be eligible to serve as Panel Members. Consulting Teachers shall be assigned to renewable annual terms.

Section 4. Consulting Teachers' Terms of Service and Duties

Teachers deemed qualified by the PAR Panel to be Consulting Teachers will be assigned to an annual pool for potential Consulting Teacher service. Consulting Teacher assignments will be distributed as needed among the various grade levels, subject fields and schools with a reasonable effort to match locations of Consulting Teachers with those of PAR participants being served. Such assignments will be made by the Coordinator of Professional Development, subject to approval and monitoring by the PAR Panel. Those in the pool who are not assigned a Consulting Teacher caseload will be eligible for renewal under the same criteria as those who are assigned a caseload. Formative assessment training is required of all teachers in the eligible pool. Such training will be paid at the substitute rate if on unassigned time; if on assigned instructional time, released time shall be provided.

Consulting Teachers shall perform the following duties pursuant to oversight of the Panel and direction of the District's Coordinator(s) of Professional Development:

- a. Provide peer assistance and support to beginning newly credentialed teachers, fully credentialed teachers new to the District, and Pre-Intern teachers, including observations, consultations and guidance. Services to such individuals shall not result in the preparation or submission of reports (regarding the teacher's performance) to the Panel or to the District.
- b. Provide peer assistance and confidential guidance to permanent teachers who have requested same, including observations, consultations and guidance. Services to such individuals shall not result in the preparation or submission of reports (regarding the teacher's performance) to the Panel or to the District.

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- c. Provide peer assistance and guidance to permanent teachers who have been referred to the PAR Program after having received an overall unsatisfactory performance evaluation based upon performance problems in the area(s) of subject matter knowledge, classroom management, teaching strategies or teaching methods and instruction. (Other types of unsatisfactory performance, such as misconduct or unlawful behavior, will not normally be regarded as included within PAR Program purview). Such referred teachers shall be permitted to select their designated Consulting Teacher from a list of three Consulting Teachers provided by the Coordinator of Professional Development.
- d. Consulting Teacher services shall include multiple observations of the teacher during periods of classroom instruction; written monitoring of progress; coaching/counseling the teacher; recommendations to the teacher as to instruction materials, lesson plans, teaching methods and practices; and activities such as observations of exemplary teachers and participation in staff development activities and training programs. All of such efforts are to be consistent with school and District curriculum and expectations, and shall also be consistent with the goals, objectives and recommendations established by the teacher's administrative evaluator. The Teacher Consultant, the referred teacher and the evaluator shall meet and discuss such matters in order to align and coordinate the assistance being provided.
- e. Reasonable released time, charged to PAR program funds, shall be provided to permit the Consulting Teacher to conduct classroom observations of the Participating Teacher, and to permit the Participating Teacher to observe other teachers.
- f. The final report by the Consulting Teacher as to a participating teacher's involvement in the PAR process, including a description of the assistance provided, shall be prepared in writing and submitted to the teacher, to the administrator-evaluator, and to the Panel. The report will be made available for placement in the personnel file of the teacher only at the request of the teacher. The report shall not itself be included or referenced in the teacher's evaluation or in any teacher-termination proceedings, unless the employee claims that he or she received inadequate support and assistance.
- g. Perform other related assistance, guidance and review duties as assigned, including occasional demonstration lessons and professional development activities.
- h. All District performance evaluations shall remain the sole responsibility of administration. The Consulting Teacher is not to conduct or participate in the District's annual evaluations of the employees to whom the Consulting Teacher is assigned. Consulting Teacher assistance and guidance is expected to be among the recommendations for assistance and improvement as part of the Stull Act evaluation process for some veteran teachers; however, neither Consulting Teacher assistance, assessment, recommendations, or report, nor any particular observations, findings or conclusions of the Consulting Teacher, shall be treated as a pre-condition for any teacher-termination proceedings. Also, such matters shall not be introduced or treated as evidence in any teacher-termination

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proceedings unless the employee claims that he or she received inadequate support and assistance.

Section 5. Consulting Teacher Terms and Compensation

Consulting Teachers will be compensated in a manner commensurate with their caseload up to a maximum of \$6,000 per school year. Caseload maximums for Consulting Teachers shall be defined by the following criteria:

- a. \$750 per year for support service to each credentialed teacher new to the District or other permanent credentialed teacher who has voluntarily entered the PAR program;
- b. \$1,500 per year for support service to each BTSA/Induction teacher; and
- c. \$3,000 per year for support service to each Referred Teacher.

In return for this compensation, it is expected that the Consulting Teacher will provide 25 hours per year of service beyond their regular full-time instructional duties for each new teacher or volunteer, 50 hours per year for each BTSA Induction teacher and 100 hours per year for each referred teacher. It is also expected that each Consulting Teacher will contribute an additional six hours of professional development training per year and attend all Consulting Teacher meetings. All Consulting Teacher compensation will be paid as a stipend twice annually. Such payments will be prorated to reflect service of less than the full year's required hours. A Consulting Teacher's stipend becomes activated at the time the caseload is assigned.

Section 6. Protections for Panel Members and Consulting Teachers

No Consulting Teacher duties, or PAR Panel duties, shall be deemed to constitute either management or supervisory functions under Government Code Section 3540.1 (g) and/or (m). The District shall provide such persons with legal indemnity from liability (including District paid defense), pursuant to Government Code Section 810, as to claims or liabilities arising out their performance of their PAR Program functions. Performance evaluation and any resulting disciplinary or termination proceedings remain exclusively the responsibility of administration. No actions or inactions of the Panel and/or Consulting Teachers are subject to employee grievance or arbitration claims, or any other claims by or on behalf of employees.

Section 7. Amendments to this Article

In order to facilitate timely ongoing development of the PAR program in accordance with program needs, sections of this Article may be re-opened for modification at any time upon the mutual consent of both parties.