

ARTICLE 14: PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW PROGRAM (PAR)

14.1 PURPOSE

- 14.1.1 The Association and the District are continuously striving to provide the highest possible quality of education. In order for students to succeed in learning, teachers must succeed in teaching. Therefore, the parties agree to cooperate in the design and implementation of this program to improve the quality of instruction through Peer Assistance and Review. The Peer Assistance and Review Program (PAR) allows exemplary teachers to assist permanent teachers.
- 14.1.2 Teachers referred to or who volunteer for the program are viewed as valuable professionals who deserve to have the best resources available provided to them in the interest of improving performance to a successful standard. Peer Assistance shall be provided through consulting teachers as described in this Article. It shall not involve the participation of the consulting teacher in the evaluation of the unit member required by the Education Code and Article 13 of this agreement.
- 14.1.3 The final report of a referred teacher's participation in the program shall be made available for placement in the personnel file of the teacher receiving assistance.
- 14.1.4 The extent of assistance and review depends upon whether the participating teacher is a volunteer permanent teacher, or a "referred teacher," e.g., a permanent teacher who has received an unsatisfactory evaluation pursuant to Article 13 of this agreement.
- 14.1.5 The PAR Program does not apply to temporary and probationary teachers.

14.2 DEFINITIONS

- 14.2.1 Participating Teacher is a permanent teacher who either volunteers or is required by this article to participate in the program.
 - 14.2.1.1 Referred Teacher is a teacher with permanent status whose most recent performance evaluation was unsatisfactory pursuant to Article 13 of this agreement and required by this article to participate.
 - 14.2.1.2 Voluntary participating teacher is a permanent teacher who is not required to participate in this program. Voluntary participation is for the purpose of professional growth utilizing the assistance of a consulting teacher.
- 14.2.2 Consulting Teacher is an exemplary teacher meeting the requirements of this article, selected by the joint panel to provide program assistance to a participating teacher.
- 14.2.3 Principal or evaluator is the certificated administrator appointed by the District to evaluate a permanent teacher.

14.3 JOINT PEER REVIEW PANEL

- 14.3.1** The PAR Program shall be administered by a Joint Peer Review Panel (“The Panel”), which shall consist of seven (7) members, three (3) of whom shall be selected by the District, and four (4) of whom shall be permanent teachers who are chosen to serve by the Association. The Panel shall be chaired in the first year by a teacher and in the following year by a member selected by the District. The chair shall thereafter rotate on an annual basis between teacher and District members.
- 14.3.2** The term of service for teacher Panel members shall be staggered so that two (2) of the four (4) members shall be appointed each year for a 2-year term as follows: two (2) one-year terms and two (2) two-year terms. District Panel members and all subsequent teacher members shall serve for two (2) years. The appointments will be determined by May 15th.
- 14.3.3** The Panel shall establish its own meeting schedule. To meet and/or conduct business five (5) of the panel members, at least three (3) of the Association members and two (2) of the District members, must be present.
- 14.3.4** Teacher members of the Panel shall receive release time to be determined by the panel in order to perform their duties. Where practicable, the work of the Panel shall be completed during the regular teacher workday. When the Panel’s work is completed during the regular teacher workday, the teacher members shall be compensated for two (2) hours at the Staff/Curriculum Development rate for substitute planning time.
- 14.3.5** If in carrying out their responsibilities as a member of the Panel, teachers find it necessary to work beyond their regular work day, they shall be compensated at the hourly rate for Staff/Curriculum Development.
- 14.3.6** The Panel shall make all decisions through consensus in the areas of appointments, recommendations to the Board, program plan, and recommended budget. In the absence of consensus, decisions will be made by an affirmative vote of at least five (5) panel members.

14.4 JOINT REVIEW PANEL RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Panel shall include the following:

- (a) Providing annual training for the Panel members.
- (b) Adopting Rules and Procedures to effect the provisions of this Article and distributing them to all bargaining unit members.
- (c) Determining the number of Consulting Teachers in any school year, based upon participation in the PAR Program, the budget available and other relevant considerations.
- (d) Establishing the timeline, selection procedure, and selecting Consulting Teachers.
- (e) Selecting and providing training for Consulting Teachers prior to the Consulting Teacher’s participation in the program.
- (f) Preparing written guidelines and necessary report forms for Consulting Teachers and their activities.
- (g) Reviewing reports prepared by Consulting Teachers by May 30th.

- (h) Making a report to the Governing Board of the District concerning referred Participating Teachers, including forwarding the names of Participants, who after sustained assistance, are not able to demonstrate improvement to a successful standard.
- (i) Preparing an annual review of the impact of the PAR Program, including recommendations for improvement.
- (j) Developing an annual PAR program budget proposal within District's Business Support Services timelines. PAR program budget subject to Board approval.
- (k) Determining the caseload of the Consulting Teachers and assigning Consulting Teachers to Participating Teachers.
- (l) Determine eligibility of volunteer Participating Teachers and assigning Consulting Teachers to those eligible.
- (m) Reviewing the performance of the Consulting Teacher.

All proceedings and materials related to evaluations, reports and other personnel matters shall be strictly confidential. Therefore, Panel members and Consulting Teachers may disclose such information only as necessary to administer this Article.

14.5 CONSULTING TEACHERS

- (a) A Consulting Teacher is an exemplary teacher who provides assistance to a Participating Teacher pursuant to the PAR Program. Consulting Teachers shall have the following minimum qualifications:
- (b) A permanent teacher with at least three (3) active and consecutive years of substantial recent teaching experience in the District.
- (c) Demonstrated exemplary teaching ability, as indicated by, among other things, effective communication skills, subject matter knowledge, and mastery of a range of teaching strategies necessary to meet the needs of students in different contexts.
- (d) Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- (e) Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively and effectively with other teachers and administrators.
- (f) Demonstrated effective leadership skills and experience in working on school and/or District committees.

14.5.1 Application Process

A notice of vacancy will be posted at all sites in order to fill a Consulting Teacher position. Each applicant is required to submit three (3) references from individuals with specific knowledge of his/her expertise as follows:

A reference from at least one (1) site principal or immediate supervisor.

A reference from at least one (1) certificated colleague.

All applications and references shall be treated with confidentiality. Applicants for Consulting Teacher position will submit a completed application by posted closing date.

14.5.2 Selection Process

Based on a review of the application, the Panel shall select candidates for an interview. Part of the interview process shall include the observation of each candidate at least once by no fewer than two (2) Panel members (one (1) administrator and one (1) teacher).

Consulting Teachers shall be selected by a majority vote of the Joint Review Panel following completion of the application review process. The Panel, based upon participation in the PAR Program, the budget available, and other relevant considerations will determine the number of Consulting Teachers in any school year.

14.5.3 Terms and Conditions

14.5.3.1 Consulting Teachers shall receive a stipend of \$3,000 per referred teacher, and/or \$2,000 per voluntary teacher, when assigned to provide peer assistance as described in this Article. The Panel may appropriately prorate stipends for partial year service. Funds shall be allocated for release of consulting teachers to provide services, workshops for participating teachers, administrative costs, and training or meetings. No more than two (2) participating teachers may be assigned to each consulting teacher.

14.5.3.2 The Panel may select one (1) or more consulting teachers as “Teacher on Special Assignment” with full or partial release (minimum of 50%). In the event that a consulting teacher is provided with full or partial release time to perform duties, no stipend shall be issued. No more than fifteen (15) participating teachers may be assigned to any full time released consulting teacher.

14.5.3.3 The Consulting Teacher’s term will be one (1) year, and may be renewed by the panel for a total of three (3) consecutive years of service as a Consulting Teacher, provided that the annual service as a Consulting Teacher has been satisfactory to the Panel. A released Consulting Teacher may reapply after returning to the classroom for one (1) year.

14.5.3.4 Upon completion of the released Consulting Teacher’s first year, the Consulting Teacher will have the right to return to his/her previous assignment. After the first year, Consulting Teachers will be guaranteed a teaching position for which they are credentialed or legally authorized; however, it may not be the same assignment or work site.

14.5.3.5 Consulting Teachers will be trained to understand the specific functions of the PAR Program. The Panel will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Consulting Teacher and make decisions regarding their continuation in the program. The Panel may remove a Consulting Teacher from the position at any time because of the specific needs of the PAR Program (i.e. reduction in number of

participating teachers), not fulfilling Consulting Teacher responsibilities, or other just cause. Prior to the effective date of such removal, the Panel will provide the Consulting Teacher with a written statement of the reasons for the removal and, at the request of Consulting Teacher, will meet to discuss the reasons.

14.6 CONSULTING TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Consulting Teachers shall include the following:

- (a) Establish mutually agreed upon performance goals with the Referred Teacher and principal/evaluator.
- (b) Provide consultative assistance to improve in the specific areas targeted by the principal/evaluator, in the case of the referred teacher, or the areas targeted by the Voluntary Teacher.
- (c) For referred teachers, conduct at least two (2) observations per month during periods of classroom instruction. For Voluntary Teachers, observations will be as outlined in the assistance plan developed by the Consulting Teacher and the Voluntary Teacher. The Voluntary Teacher assistance plan shall be submitted to the Joint Panel within fifteen (15) working days of the assignment.
- (d) Demonstrate effective teaching practices to the Participating Teacher and facilitate the observation of other exemplary teachers.
- (e) Access District resources to assist the Participating Teacher.
- (f) Provide a monthly log to the Referred Teacher and the Panel regarding the specific nature of assistance being provided for each objective, and meeting with the Referred Teacher on a regular basis.
- (g) Attend training as determined by the Panel.
- (h) The Consulting Teacher shall provide each Referred Teacher no less than fifteen (15) hours of assistance per trimester. Consulting Teachers shall assist Participating Teachers by demonstrating, observing, coaching, conferencing, referring or by other activities, which, in their professional judgment, will assist the Participating Teacher.
- (i) The Consulting Teacher shall complete monthly logs for referred teachers for the Panel and shall appear before the Panel on a regular basis as determined by the Panel to discuss the progress of the Participating Teacher. The written monthly logs shall at a minimum, include an assessment as to whether the referred teacher is demonstrating improvement and whether continued assistance is necessary.
- (j) The Consulting Teacher shall complete and submit a monthly log to the Panel reflecting observations and/or contact with the Voluntary Teacher and whether continued assistance is necessary.
- (k) The Consulting Teacher shall submit a Final Report by April 15th to the referred teacher. The referred teacher may attach written comments and return the report to the Consulting Teacher within five (5) working days. His/her signature indicates receipt of the document, but not necessarily agreement with its contents. No later than May 1st, the Final Report including any referred teacher's comments shall be submitted to the Panel and principal/evaluator.

- (l) All reports shall be placed in the personnel file of the Referred Participating Teacher. The District in any personnel decisions or proceedings regarding the Referred Teacher may use the information obtained through participation in PAR Program. This information shall be accessible to the administrator(s) responsible for evaluating the performance of the Referred Teacher.

14.7 PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

(a) Referred Teacher

A Referred Teacher is a permanent teacher who receives assistance to improve his or her instructional skills, classroom management, knowledge of subject, and/or related aspects of his or her teaching performance as a result of an unsatisfactory final evaluation (Article 13). The principal/evaluator will provide the teacher with specific objectives and written recommendations regarding areas of improvement.

After the final written evaluation by principal/evaluator, fifteen (15) days prior to the end of the school year, the Panel will assign the Consulting Teacher to address the areas for improvement as identified by the principal/evaluator. The Participating Teacher may request to be assigned to a specific Consulting Teacher.

Once the teacher is referred and before the end of the school year, the principal/evaluator, the Referred Teacher, and the Consulting Teacher shall meet to discuss the unsatisfactory performance and recommended areas of improvement outlined by the principal, and to collaboratively identify types of assistance to be provided.

It is anticipated that a referred teacher shall stay in the PAR Program for no more than a calendar year. However, a Referred Teacher may, under special circumstances, remain in the Program for a total of eighteen (18) months upon a Panel recommendation.

Documents generated by Consulting Teachers and Panel Members regarding specific Referred Teachers as part of the assistance process set forth in this agreement shall be deemed personnel records and shall remain confidential to the extent required by the law. All reports shall be placed in the personnel file of the referred Participating Teacher. The District in any personnel decisions or proceedings regarding the Referred Teacher may use the information obtained through participation in PAR Program. This information shall be accessible to the administrator(s) responsible for evaluating the performance of the Participating Teacher.

(b) Voluntary Teachers

A Voluntary Teacher is a permanent classroom teacher who volunteers to participate in the PAR program.

The Voluntary Teacher may apply to the Panel in writing to be assigned to work with a Consulting Teacher. The Voluntary Teacher may request to be assigned to a specific Consulting Teacher.

Upon assignment, the Consulting Teacher shall meet with the Voluntary Teacher to develop a plan for voluntary assistance. The plan may be submitted to the principal for purposes of coordination and planning, upon the Voluntary Teacher's

consent. The purpose of participation in the PAR Program for the Voluntary Teacher is for peer assistance designed to promote professional development. The documented hours spent by a Voluntary Teacher may count towards professional growth. The Consulting Teacher shall not participate in a performance review of the Voluntary Teacher.

The Voluntary Teacher may terminate participation in the PAR program at any time. The Joint Panel may terminate participation in the PAR program based on program parameters (Article 14.4 (l), Article 14.6 (j), Article 14.7(b) paragraph 7). A Voluntary Teacher may be involuntarily placed in the Program in the event the teacher receives an unsatisfactory evaluation.

Voluntary Teachers in the PAR Program shall not have any documentation placed in their personnel files issued as a result of their participation.

Resources of the program budgeted by the Board for PAR shall first be allocated to Referred Teachers.

14.8 STATUS AND LIABILITY PROTECTION OF UNIT MEMBERS

Functions performed by unit members under this Article shall not constitute either management or supervisory functions as defined in the Educational Employment Relations Act.

Unit members who perform functions as Consulting Teachers or Panel members shall have the same protection from liability and access to appropriate defense as afforded to other public school employees under the provisions of the California Government Code.

14.9 BUDGET PRIORITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The District shall not be required to allocate funds for the programs as set forth in this Article in addition to those funds provided by the Legislature for implementation.

The Joint Panel shall recommend to the Governing Board a budget for the program and administrative expenses within the allocated legislative funding limits.