

Medicine Hat Catholic Teachers

Policy Guidelines Regarding the Use of Individual Professional Development Accounts

I. Preamble:

The purpose of this document is to provide information regarding the Individual Professional Development Accounts that currently exist within our district.

Negotiated for teachers by the Economic Policy (EPC) of Medicine Hat Catholic Teachers and therefore a part of the Collective Agreement, each teacher in the district receives an annual professional development allowance of \$500.00 per full time equivalent from the board, which can accumulate to the sum of \$2500.00. These funds can be accessed by completing the "Teacher Allotted Professional Development" form available from your school secretary or business manager.

II. Understanding Professional Development:

Professional Development is defined as:

Programs or activities that engage teachers individually or collectively in a process leading to improved professional practice and enhanced student learning.

Professional development is the responsibility of all teachers as outlined in the provincial Teacher Growth, Supervision, and Evaluation policy. Individual professional development refers to professional growth activities across one's career that attends to personally identify learning needs. It provides teachers with a wide range of opportunities for growth and the development of skills and attitudes leading to improve teaching practice.

In the Alberta Teachers' Association document entitled *Enhancing Teaching Practice for Student Learning...A Framework for Professional Development in Alberta* the profession has identified several key principles regarding teacher professional development, which include;

- Professional development respects the professional judgment of teachers and assumes an on-going growth model for improvement.
- Professional development, based on clearly stated objectives, focuses on improving teaching and supports learning.
- Professional development provides teachers with opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills to implement curriculum requirements, instructional

strategies and evaluation techniques required to provide optimum learning opportunities for all students.

- Professional development requires the continuous refinement of skills, inquiry into practice and development of methods.
- Professional development of the highest caliber is essential if teachers are to keep up with educational changes and cope with the demands of a constantly shifting society.

III. Guidelines for the use of Individual Professional Development Funds:

The following have been developed in keeping with the key principles for professional development as identified by the professional association (profession?);

A. Funds in individual professional development accounts **may** be used for:

- tuition
- conference fees and related expenses
- additional Specialist Council memberships...

B. Funds in individual professional development accounts **may not** be used for:

- The purchase of capital goods such as computers, PDA devices.
- The purchase of sports equipment or clothing...

Local Council has ratified these guidelines.

IV. Questions?

Any questions should be directed to your school PD rep.

Deanna Burzminski

Medicine Hat Catholic ATA PD Chair