



GERING

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH



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Guidelines and Procedures

All certification staff members are encouraged to grow professionally by attending college classes/workshops, serving on professional committees, and participating in other approved activities. Each permanent certified staff member must complete 6 professional growth points in a six-year period to meet the requirements of the Nebraska School Law (see statutory reference 79-830) which states:

“Every six (6) years permanent certificated employees shall give evidence of professional growth. Six (6) semester hours of college credit shall be accepted as evidence of professional growth or, in the alternative, such other activities as are approved by the school board which may include, but are not limited to, education travel, professional publications, or work on educational committees.”

1. Each **tenured** employee must earn **6** professional growth points **every 6 years**.
2. The professional growth period begins in the fall of the year in which tenure status was attained and each 6-year period thereafter shall constitute the applicable professional growth period.
3. The 6-year period goes from **September 1st to August 31st**. The exception is the newly tenured teacher who starts from the first day of the 4th school year rather than on September 1st.
4. Tenure officially begins at the **start of the 4th school year** (see statutory reference 79-824). For newly tenured teachers, Professional Growth starts on the first day of tenure so any activities completed during the summer months before do not count.
5. Professional growth points are granted from the list of professional growth activities, which was agreed to by the Board of Education. **Pre-approval is not needed** unless there is a question about the activity. Since activity #10 is subject to discretion of the Superintendent/Designee, pre-approval is recommended if it is not a district-sponsored activity.

6. It will be the responsibility of the Central Office Administrator to approve completed activities according to the outlines criteria, to keep records of the points earned by each certified employee, and to notify the employee of his/her Professional Growth status. All current Professional Growth Records and documentation will be kept on file at Central Office.
7. Graduate college credit classes can be used for both Professional Growth and Salary Movement; however, **two SEPARATE** and **DIFFERENT** forms must be filled out. Graduate courses for Salary Movement must have prior approval from Central Office (in accordance with the Professional Agreement.)
8. Upon completion of an activity, the certified employee must fill out a ***Professional Growth Activity Form*** and send the original form to Central Office for approval. Some type of written proof of verification must be on the form or attached to it.
9. Once the 6-point requirement has been met, any **extra activities** will not be counted during the remainder of the 6-year period. No activities can be carried over to the next 6-year Professional Growth period.
10. Staff members who have not completed the Professional Growth requirement by the end of the 6-year period will have no advancement on the salary schedule or any increase in salary for the next year.
11. Failure of a certificated employee to show evidence of sufficient professional growth at the end of his/her six-year cycle would be in violation of District policy (see File: 409.01) and also of the above mentioned state statute. This could be considered grounds for termination under the heading “just cause.”
12. Tenured employees will be informed once a year of the total number of Professional Growth points earned.
13. Principals will receive yearly notification of the status of the employees in their building. This will allow administrators to communicate with the individuals regarding their professional growth requirements.

GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH ACTIVITES

Professional Growth points are awarded for the following activities:

1. **COLLEGE COURSES**: Graduate or undergraduate courses relating to present position or in preparation for a different assignment.
 - 1 college credit = 1 professional growth point
 - **6 maximum** professional growth points allowable
 - *Proof*: Copy of college report card or college transcript

NOTE: Graduate courses must be approved by the Superintendent/Designee for advancement on the salary schedule.
2. **AUDITING A COLLEGE CREDIT COURSE**: Class is attended but not taken for college credit
 - 1 credit (15 contact hours) = 1.0 professional growth point
 - **3 maximum** professional growth points allowable
 - *Proof*: Class audit slip, certificate or permission note from instructor
3. **SUPERVISION OF STUDENT TEACHER**
 - 1 completed term (8 weeks) = 1 professional growth point
 - **2 maximum** professional growth points allowable
 - *Proof*: Signature of building administrator or college supervisor
4. **DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE WORK**
 - Example: School Improvement Committee
 - 8 hours of work = 0.5 professional growth point
 - Must accumulate minimum of 4 hours to be counted
 - **2 maximum** professional growth points allowable
 - *Proof*: Description of tasks, log of hours involved, and signature of committee chairperson
5. **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION OFFICE OR COMMITTEE MEMBER:**

Must be related to educational field at the state or national level

 - 8 hours of work = 0.5 professional growth point
 - Must accumulate minimum of 4 hours to be counted
 - **1 maximum** professional growth point allowable
 - *Proof*: Copy of program, agenda, minutes, or signature of chairperson/administrator

6. **CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE**: Course must be relative to present teaching position
 - 8 hours of class work = 0.5 professional growth point
 - Must be a minimum of 4 hours to be counted
 - **2 maximum** professional growth points allowable
 - *Proof*: Signature of instructor for successful course completion

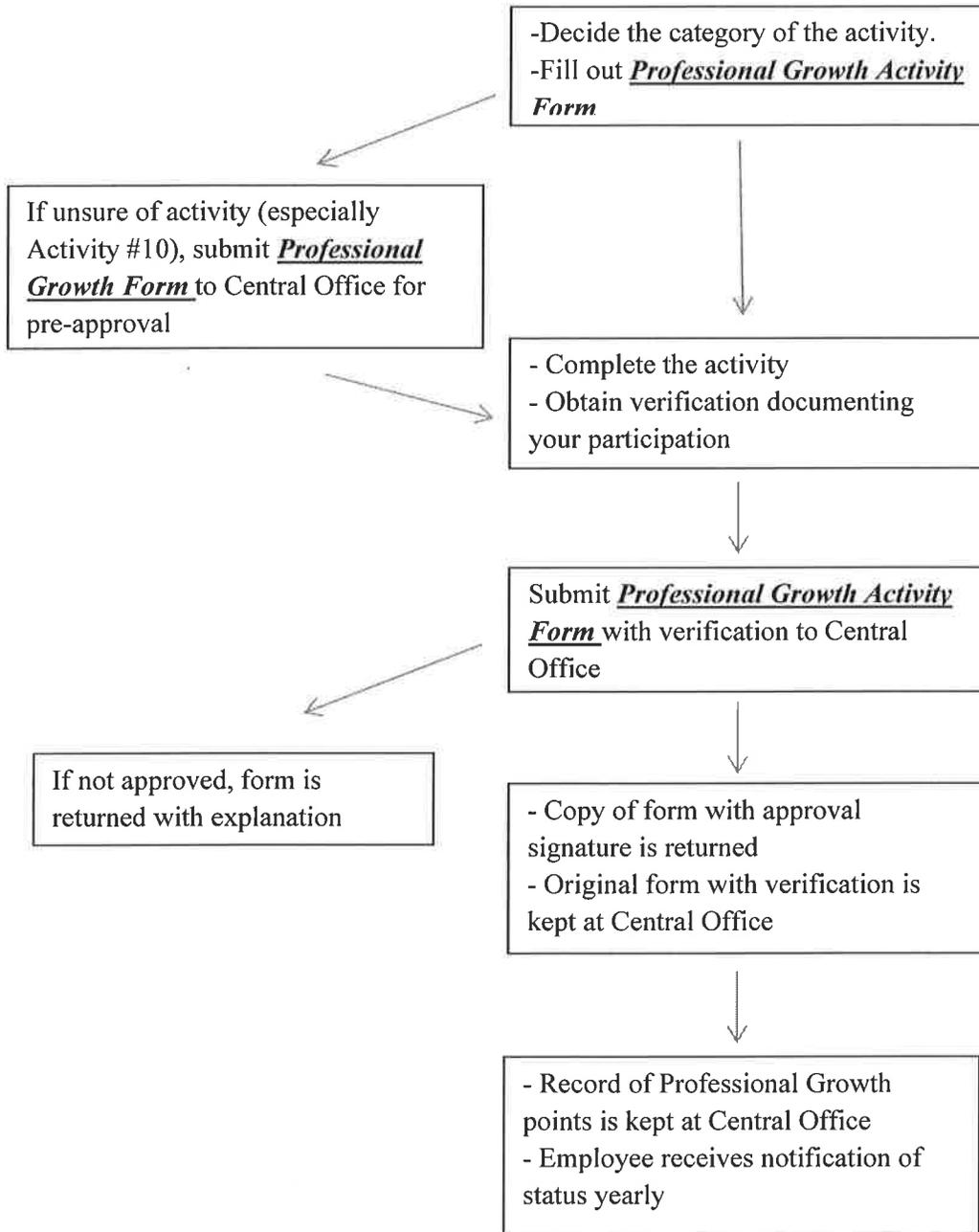
7. **PRESENTER AT REGIONAL, STATE, OR NATIONAL CONFERENCE**:
Presentation must be related to educational topic
 - 1 hour presentation = 1 professional growth point
 - **2 maximum** professional growth points allowable
 - *Proof*: Copy of conference program with your name highlighted

8. **PRESENTER AT GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS/REGIONAL SCHOOLS STAFF DEVELOPMENT**: Presentation must be related to educational topic
 - 1 hour presentation = 1 professional growth point
 - **2 maximum** professional growth point
 - *Proof*: Signature of Central Office administrator

9. **EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS**: Must be beneficial to present teaching field
 - 8 hours/1 day participation = 0.5 professional growth point
 - Must be a minimum of 4 hours/half day long to be counted
 - **6 maximum** professional growth points allowable
 - *Proof*: Signature of workshop instructor or sponsoring administrator

10. **OTHER ACTIVITIES AS APPROVED**: Activity must have approval by the Superintendent/Designee
 - Example: District staff development, accreditation teams
 - Pre-approval by Superintendent/Designee is recommended if activity is not district-sponsored
 - 8 hours/1 day participation = 0.5 professional growth point
 - Must be minimum of 4 hours or accumulate to 4 hours, unless deemed differently by the Superintendent
 - **6 maximum** professional growth points available
 - *Proof*: Signature of Superintendent/Designee from Central Office, other form of verification as required by Superintendent/Designee

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH FLOWCHART



GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH ACTIVITY FORM

Name _____ Building _____

Category of Activity (Check one):

- College Courses** (Activity # 1) – *Attach college report card or transcript*
- Auditing College Credit Course** (Activity # 2) – *Attach audit slip, certificate, or permission note from instructor*
- Supervision of Student Teacher** (Activity # 3) – *Confirm with authorized signature below*
- District Educational Committee** (Activity # 4) – *Include description of committee work, hours worked, and signature of chairperson below*
- Professional Organization Officer or Committee Member** (Activity # 5) – *Attach program, agenda, minutes, or obtain authorized signature below*
- Continuing Education Course** (Activity # 6) – *Confirm with authorized signature below*
- Presenter at Regional, State, or National Conference** (Activity # 7) – *Attach conference program with your name highlighted*
- Presenter at GPS/Regional Schools Staff Development** (Activity # 8) – *Confirm with authorized signature below*
- Educational Conferences/Workshops/Seminars** (Activity # 9) – *Confirm with authorized signature below*
- Other Activities as Approved by Superintendent/Designee** (Activity # 10) – *Confirm with signature of Superintendent/Designee, attach other form of verification if required by Superintendent/Designee*
 - Pre-approval: Accepted Not accepted Signature _____

Title/Description of Activity _____

Date(s) of Activity _____

Number of Hours/Days Participated _____

Amount of Professional Growth Points _____

Signature of Administrator/Chairperson/Instructor _____

*****Please send this original form to Central Office - Attn: Professional Growth*****

Approved Not Approved-Reason: _____

Date _____ Signature _____

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

For Nebraska's teachers and administrators
in the public schools

Statutory Reference **79-830**

The statute is paraphrased following

For every six years* of employment, permanent** certificated staff must earn six semester hours of college credit or give evidence of professional growth*** (determined by the local board).

- * SIX YEARS applies equally to all permanent staff, not on a pro-rata basis. It is not 12 years for a half-time employee.
- ** PERMANENT means tenured. The six year clock begins ticking when the employee actually receives tenure. The next six year cycle begins as soon as the preceding six year cycle has ended.
- *** EVIDENCE OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH. . .the local board may make any determination about activities, if any, it will accept as evidence of professional growth, which may include educational travel, professional publications, or work on educational committees. It may decide that only the six hour avenue remains open to these employees.

NOTES:

The board may not elect to selectively accept some credit and not accept other credit. The statute directs that six semester hours of college credit shall be accepted.

The six hours has no necessary relevance to advancement on the salary schedule nor to use in renewing a teaching certificate since, in both of these circumstances, there are added requirements describing the hours that will or will not be accepted.

The tenured employee who fails to meet the Professional Growth requirement creates "just cause", under the law, for non renewal of contract and termination of employment. (See **79-824**).

Employees may not make adjustments of convenience in the six year requirement. While there is no clear direction in statute, it would appear that taking 8 hours, and "saving" 2 of them (because they weren't used) for the next six year term or deciding to end one six year term early so that the hours taken this summer will be on the next six year term—are examples of manipulations that are NOT permitted.

Information and advice provided by the Nebraska Department of Education. These suggestions are NOT based on any administrative Rule or regulation of the Department of Education.

The Department of Education does NOT enforce these provisions.

TENURE

FOR NEBRASKA'S TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

*

IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STATUTORY REFERENCE 79-824

CERTIFICATED** EMPLOYEES ONLY

If employed less than half time.	Employee receives no credit towards becoming a "permanent certificated employee"; cannot earn tenure
If employed half-time or more*** But less than four/fifths time.	Employee receives credit towards tenure in the same proportion that the teaching assignment bears to a full time assignment.
If employed four/fifths or more time.	Employee receives full year of credit towards tenure for each school year worked.

NOTES:

When the employee has earned three years of credit towards becoming a permanent certificate employee ("tenured"), he/she **MUST** receive that status (no delays are permitted) at the beginning of the next following school year.

*Principals, Directors, Coordinators, etc., and their assistants achieve tenure on the same basis as teachers. Superintendents do not. (There is some controversy about assistant superintendents and associate superintendents. In the absence of case law or a controlling legal opinion, however, it is generally thought that tenure is denied only to the superintendent, not denied to assistants and associates.)

**Certificate refers to a certificate issued by the Nebraska Department of Education, office of Teacher Certification, including persons who hold a Special Services Counseling Certificate.

***Until 9/6/91 the law said "more than half time"; then was changed to "half-time or more".

If continuous employment with the same employer is broken, tenure is lost, except in the instance of a true RIF when the employee will carry whatever tenure or credit towards tenure he/she has earned through the two year recall period but will not build additional

credit towards tenure during that time. (See 79-846,47,48.)

A certificated person employed in a position which does not require the certificate—as a teachers' aide—does not earn credit towards tenure for that portion of the assignment.

When a person is employed to replace a certificated employee who is on leave of absence, the employee who is on leave does not lose tenure nor does the employee who is hired as the replacement earn any credit toward becoming permanent (tenured).

**Information and advice provided by the Nebraska Department of Education
These suggestions are NOT based on any administrative Rule or regulation of the
Department of Education.**

The Department of Education does NOT enforce these provisions.

CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The board encourages certificated employees to attend and participate in professional development activities to maintain, develop, and extend their skills. The board shall maintain and support an in-service program for certificated employees.

The superintendent and or designee will develop and schedule in-service workshops as appropriate to the needs of the district and will inform the board regarding in-service staff development.

NDE standards require school districts to conduct staff development sessions. Each teacher must participate in at least ten hours of staff development activities each year.

All certified employees permanently employed by the District shall provide evidence of professional growth every six years as provided by law.

Legal Reference: NDE Rule 10
79-830

Cross Reference: 409.02 Certificated Employee Training, Workshops or
Conferences

Approved 05/19/03 Reviewed 05/12/03 Revised _____