

## The American Community School at Beirut

# Professional Development Policy

### Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to provide the faculty and staff with guidelines to pursue opportunities and expand themselves professionally in order to directly benefit the students of ACS and carry out the mission of the school.

The purpose of professional development at ACS is:

- To help put student learning at the heart of our work
- To develop faculty and staff in ways which will help to maintain and improve the overall effectiveness of the school in fulfilling its mission
- To help colleagues to maintain and improve teaching and learning leadership & management and other job related skills in the light of changing education needs
- To ensure that faculty and staff are valued and recognized as the school's most important resource and asset
- To encourage satisfaction, personal achievement, individual and team effort,
- To support the performance management process and the teacher evaluation process
- To establish ACS as a source of best practice for Lebanon and the NESR region

### Implementation

#### Supporting a range of professional development activities:

The school will support a wide portfolio of approaches to professional development. These include:

- in-school training using the expertise available within the school and collaborative activity (eg collaborative teaching, planning and assessment, work within a defined team, classroom observation, existing expertise, peer evaluation, collaborative enquiry and problem-solving, modelling)
- coaching and mentoring and engaging in a learning conversation
- job enrichment/enlargement (eg a higher level of responsibility, working in someone else's job, job sharing, acting roles, job rotation, shadowing, leading meetings)
- producing documentation or resources such as curriculum development, teaching materials, assessment package, multimedia presentations, accreditation documents and reports
- accessing an external consultant/adviser or relevant expert
- model and demonstration lessons
- collecting and collating pupil feedback, data and outcomes
- attendance at a lecture, course or conference
- school visits to observe or participate in good and successful practice

- action-research activities
- distance learning (eg webinars and online courses)
- practical experience (eg IB exam marking experience, opportunities to present a paper, contribute to a training program, coordinating or supporting a learning forum or network, involvement in local and national networks, involvement with a subject or specialist association)
- external partnerships (eg with a colleague, group, subject, phase, activity or school-based team meetings and activities such as joint planning, special project working group, involvement in a formal or informal partnership.)

### **Professional Development Funding conditions:**

- Coursework, a program, or a conference must have a direct benefit to and for the students or divisional /office goals and be in alignment with the employee's current job description.
- Accepting PD funding implies a commitment to stay at ACS for at least one more year. If this commitment is withdrawn by the employee, ACS may recover any PD costs for the current budget year for PD costs incurred after January. Human Resources will notify the business office and the supervisor of any outstanding obligations.
- After participating in a conference, employees will write a report to their supervisor summarizing what they learned from the conference, and suggesting ways of sharing with their colleagues. This can take the form of a presentation, leading an activity, peer coaching, or another format as approved by the supervisor.
- Financial assistance for university courses: up to \$750 toward the cost of one course per year, provided on a first-come first-served basis. All university coursework must be completed with an accredited or school approved institution.

### **Professional Development Process Implementation:**

- Submitting a P.D form:
  - The applicant must complete a PD form, get it signed by his or her direct supervisor and then submit it to the HR office.
  - The H.R office will present it to the Deputy Head for approval.
  - H.R will inform the applicant of the decision by sending the signed PD form by email.
- Funded costs:
  - Registration fees
  - Hotel Fees (for the nights covering the workshop/conference only)
  - Hotel rooms are booked on a double-occupancy basis for same-gender employees when possible, except for those with contract or contract renewal PD

benefits. Employees who request a private room will be charged the difference between one-half of a double room and a single room.

- Per diem Fees (50 \$ / day or \$65 /day or equivalent of 50 euros in the euro zone for the days covering the workshop/conference only)
  - Transportation fees
    - Home-Airport-Home in Beirut
    - Airport-Conference Hotel-Airport abroad
    - Conference-Hotel-Conference (only if the Hotel allocated by the Conference administration is far from the Conference venue)
  - Travel insurance (covering the period of the Workshop only)
  - Visa Fees
  - Economy Class Ticket fees (return ticket for the period of the workshop/conference only)
- Flight arrangements:
- Departure from Beirut will be one day before the workshop, unless the trip is being extended for personal reasons.
  - Return to Beirut must be on the night of the same day the workshop ends; otherwise it will be the morning of the day after depending on flight availability. In this case the extra night at the Hotel is covered by the school.
  - Flight options will be chosen according the best connection, best layover times available.
- Extending your trip for Personal reasons:
- The Faculty/Staff member must confirm with his or her supervisor about the days he/she will be absent.
  - The cost of extra nights at the Hotel are borne by the traveler himself
  - Extra cost that will result from the extension of the ticket or change of the ticket is borne by the traveler himself
  - No per diem is paid on those extra days
  - Transportation expenses other than Airport-Hotel-Airport are borne by the traveler himself unless prior approved by the Deputy Head.
  - Extra travel insurance for the extended days are borne by the traveler himself
  - Any extra costs incurred for personal reasons/requests are borne by the traveler
  - All personal travel arrangements outside of the Conference scope must be arranged by the traveler.