

POLICY

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The District School Board of Niagara encourages all employees to be life-long learners supported by Staff Development that is based on system, school and individual needs. The following definitions seek to clarify the key components of effective and comprehensive staff development:

- **Training:** Training provides specialized instruction to fulfil the basic needs required for competency in a specific job. Training is either legislated or mandated by a Board, usually for the purposes of safety or accountability.
- **In-Service:** In-service provides individuals with both self-initiated and Board-initiated opportunities to broaden their skills and become more effective in their respective, ever-changing jobs.
- **Professional Growth:** Professional Growth encompasses a wide variety of self-initiated activities that enhance growth in the individual's respective fields.

The District School Board of Niagara's Staff Development is offered and supported at the Board, region, school and department levels.

The District School Board of Niagara believes in supporting new staff to the Board through processes, including the following:

- **Induction:** Induction is a process for new employees (first two years) that includes all the activities that train and support new employees and it acculturates them to the mission and philosophy of their school/department and the District School Board of Niagara. Induction encompasses orientation, mentoring, ongoing structured training, and other components.
- **Mentoring:** Mentoring is defined as a non-evaluative process which entails a role model in a "role-alike" position dialoguing to share knowledge, experiences, needs and strategies.
- **Orientation:** Orientation involves familiarization with the operational procedures of the school/department and the District School Board of Niagara.

The Board supports the principle that workers should be multi-skilled, within parameters of Collective Agreements and job descriptions. Cross training helps to implement this principle:

- **Cross Training:** Cross training develops employees who can readily adapt to changes in job requirements and advancing technology. Cross training may be used as a strategy to enable employees to become more productive, prepared for new opportunities, as well as creating more flexibility within departments.

A Staff Development Co-ordinating Committee will facilitate communication and co-ordination of Staff Development opportunities for individuals and groups within the District School Board of Niagara.