

Polson
Professional Advancement
System

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1. Introduction

This document describes the Polson Professional Advancement System (PPAS)

Participation in PPAS is mandatory for all teachers covered by the PEA master agreement.

PPAS is primarily intended to support teachers' professional growth and improvement as teachers. However, PPAS results may also influence promotion, assignment, and termination decisions, so it is important that all affected staff members read and understand this document. *If there is something in this document that you do not understand, please seek clarification from an administrator or an Appraisal Team member.*

1.1 Purpose

The stated purpose of PPAS is to attract, motivate and retain quality teachers. PPAS will be an attainable, affordable and accountable compensation plan that fosters high levels of student growth, achievement and academic excellence. The PPAS will encourage and reward professional growth, knowledge and responsibility.

The PPAS is a multidimensional model where creativity is encouraged. It encourages teachers to take risks within their disciplines, to try something different to enhance student achievement, and to develop a relationship with the school district.

The PPAS model consists of two strands: the Accountability Strand and a Professional Advancement Strand.

1.2 Authority, Clarifications, and Revisions

The district and association agree on the following provisions concerning the authority and administration of PPAS.

- a. **Authority:** The association and the district agree that the PPAS provisions and requirements described in this document constitute an addendum to the Master Employment Contract. Any changes to PPAS must follow the same negotiation procedures required for changes to the Master Employment Contract.
- b. **Appraisal Team Makeup:** Appraisal Teams play an important role not only as evaluators in the PPAS Professional Advancement Strand (discussed later in this document), but also in PPAS's overall management. Each building shall have its own Appraisal team comprised of the appropriate building administrator(s) and a pool of four teachers from that building. Two teachers shall be appointed by the PEA and two by the administration. The Superintendent or their designee may attend the meetings as an observer. In order to meet, a quorum of three teachers and an administrator must be present to conduct business.
- c. **Process Consistency / Quality Assurance:** Annually a team comprised of the Superintendent or designee, PEA president or designee, plus an administrator and one certified staff member from each appraisal team's pool shall meet to review how the PPAS is working across the district. The goal of this meeting is to ensure some level of consistency is maintained between buildings. When necessary, the Appraisal Teams and/or the District Quality Assurance Team shall make recommendations for revisions of this document to the PEA Executive Committee and the district's Board of Trustees, both of which must approve any changes before they may be adopted.

2. Overview of Accountability and Professional Advancement Strands

As shown in Table 1, all non-tenured teachers entering PPAS begin on the Accountability Strand. Non-tenured teachers are eligible for advancement on the salary ladder upon receiving positive evaluations as defined in this document. During their year of scheduled evaluation on the Accountability Strand tenured teachers will advance on the salary ladder upon receipt of a positive evaluation as defined in this document.

Non-tenured teachers are not eligible to move to the Professional Advancement Strand until achieving tenure. With some exceptions (mentioned below), tenured teachers move back and forth between the two strands, spending one year on the Accountability Strand for every two years on the Professional Advancement Strand.

Table 1 PPAS Strand Placement	
Accountability	Professional Advancement
Non-tenured teachers for the first three years of PPAS participation	Tenured teachers for up to two years at a time**
Tenured teachers, at least every third year*	
Any teacher whose performance has been rated "unsatisfactory" by an immediate supervisor	
<p>*Tenured teachers may elect to stay in the Accountability Strand in lieu of the Professional Advancement Strand but waive their right to an annual step increase by doing so. Non Tenured teacher shall receive a step upon successful evaluation while on the Accountability Strand*</p> <p>** Tenured teachers must return to the Accountability Strand every third year for evaluation.</p>	

2.1 Overview of Professional Advancement Strand

While on the Professional Advancement Strand, teachers are not evaluated on the basis of formal observations, as they are on the Accountability Strand. Instead, teachers submit Professional Advancement Plans, enumerating professional development and service goals to be accomplished each year. Teachers are expected to self monitor the progress toward these goals and to have regular conversations regarding the status of their plans with the appropriate administrator throughout the year.

Successful performance under the terms set out in an approved Professional Advancement Plan is required for promotion eligibility. Failure to obtain approval of a Professional Advancement Plan, will result in assignment to the Accountability Strand for the duration of the school year. (Note: If a teacher submits a plan and it is not accepted by the review committee during the Spring and/or Fall review period then he/she goes to the accountability strand for that year and would not be eligible for promotion on the salary schedule regardless of the outcome of the evaluation. If the Teacher submits a plan and it is accepted and at the end of the year the committee determines they were not successful they will not advance on the salary schedule).

Barring performance problems, teachers on the Professional Advancement Strand remain there for two school years, after which they return to the Accountability Strand for one school year. Upon successful completion of an Accountability Strand year, these teachers may then return to the Professional Advancement Strand.

Table 2 Accountability Strand Frequency	
Non - Tenured	Tenured
Non-tenured teachers remain on the Accountability Strand for three years and are therefore evaluated twice annually.	Tenured teachers performing satisfactorily on the Professional Advancement Strand shall be evaluated one time every third year.
	Tenured teachers choosing not to participate in the Professional Advancement Strand remain on the Accountability Strand and are therefore evaluated annually. <i>Note: Tenured Teachers who chose to stay on the accountability strand shall not receive a step on the salary ladder regardless of the outcome of the evaluation.</i>
	Tenured teachers performing unsatisfactorily remain on the Accountability Strand and are therefore evaluated annually

It is important to note that placement on the Professional Advancement Strand is never automatic but depends on (1) submission and approval of a Professional Advancement Plan and (2) ongoing satisfactory performance, as detailed in section 5.

3. Accountability Strand Procedures

The Accountability Strand is a yearlong cycle of formal observation and evaluation per the Performance Appraisal System formally negotiated and adopted by the parties hereafter referred to as the evaluation model. Every teacher placed on the Accountability Strand is formally evaluated annually (twice annually for non tenured) for as long as he or she remains on this strand. Teachers who are rated as “unsatisfactory” on any criteria may complete a Mandatory Plan of Improvement, described in section 4.7.

3.1 Accountability Strand Placement and Duration

All teachers will spend time on the Accountability Strand. Staff members who are automatically placed on the Accountability Strand include:

- All non-tenured teachers.
- Tenured teachers who have just completed a two-year Professional Advancement Strand cycle.
- Any teacher whose performance is deemed unsatisfactory by his or her immediate supervisor prior to March 1st in any of the four domains as listed in the evaluation model. In the event the performance is deemed unsatisfactory after March 1st the teacher shall be notified prior to the end of the school year if they will be moved over for the subsequent school year.

The duration of an Accountability Strand placement depends on tenure status, performance, and — in some cases — individual teacher preference. Non-tenured teachers remain on the Accountability Strand until they achieve tenure, i.e., a minimum of three years. Tenured teachers who have completed a two-year Professional Advancement Strand cycle are required to move to the Accountability Strand for one year. At their option, they may remain on the Accountability Strand indefinitely, but during the years when they are not required to be on the Accountability Strand, they will not advance on the pay ladder.

3.2 Accountability Strand Components

Table 3 shows the components of the Accountability Strand for both non-tenured and tenured teachers.

Table 3 Accountability Strand Components	
Non-tenured	Minimum of two formal observations per year in compliance with the evaluation model. Changes in the evaluation model shall automatically be incorporated into this agreement.
Tenured	Minimum of one (1) formal observation (per the evaluation model) every third year.

3.3 Evaluation Philosophy

In order to be successful, the Accountability Strand evaluation process must be a continuous, constructive, and cooperative effort between the evaluator and the teacher. Throughout the evaluation process, it is expected that both the evaluator and the teacher will exhibit integrity, professionalism, and a strong commitment to the personal and academic achievement of district students.

3.4 Right to Union Representation

Any union member may have a representative present during any part of the observation/follow up conferences.

4. Professional Advancement Strand Procedures

This section describes the Professional Advancement Strand in detail and should be considered the authoritative guide to Professional Advancement Strand procedures and requirements.

The purpose of the Professional Advancement Strand is to promote professional growth. This strand begins with goal setting. During this strand the teacher and the administrator who directly supervises the teacher have cooperative discussions, and encourage collegial interaction for the accomplishment of goals. As explained in more detail below, participation and successful performance in the Professional Advancement Strand is a requirement for promotion eligibility.

The Professional Advancement Strand is based on collaborative interaction, trust, and confidence. Growth is the desired outcome, and so the Professional Advancement Strand is not intended to represent a threat to anyone. At any time throughout a Professional Advancement Strand placement, a teacher has the option of requesting the following:

- Assistance from administrators, supervisors, district personnel, and/or colleagues.
- Inclusion of documentation of professional growth, in addition to the year-end progress report, in the teacher's personnel file. (Otherwise, such documentation is not a requirement of the program.)
- Placement into the Accountability Strand. (As stated elsewhere those who volunteer to be on the accountability strand will not be eligible for a pay advancement).

While observation-based evaluations are not an explicit component of the Professional Advancement Strand, all teachers are subject to unannounced informal observations at any time.

4.1 Professional Advancement Strand Placement and Duration

The Professional Advancement Strand is available only to tenured professional staff. Participation is voluntary. Tenured teachers who choose to participate may remain on the Professional Advancement Strand for up to two successive years (assuming satisfactory performance) before returning to the Accountability Strand for their required evaluation on the third year.

4.1.1 Transfer/Reassignment

Any teacher on the Professional Advancement Strand who transfers shall take any existing Professional Advancement Plan to the new assignment, assuming that both the teacher and his or her new supervisor agree that the goals in that plan are appropriate to the teacher's new position. In the event the plan is not relevant to the new assignment the employee and administrator shall work together to modify the plan.

4.2 Professional Advancement Strand Components

To advance to the next rung on the PPAS, a teacher who is on the Professional Advancement Strand is required to complete the components listed in table 4. Unsatisfactory performance on these components may result in the teacher not moving on the salary schedule. At the Supervisor's discretion prior to March 1st a teacher may be reassigned to the Accountability Strand. In the event the transferred teacher successfully completes the Accountability Strand he/she will move up on the salary schedule.

As mentioned in table 4, one component of the Professional Advancement Plan is Professional Service. Teachers share their professionalism with students, schools, and the district in many ways. The Professional Service component of the Professional Advancement Strand allows teachers to be recognized for their professional contributions.

Examples of Professional Service are shown in table 5.

Table 4 Professional Advancement Strand Components	
Tenured Only	<p>Professional Advancement Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write, submit, and complete a Professional Advancement Plan that meets the criteria as set forth in the Professional Advancement Plan Rubric (see appendix A) and receives approval by the Appraisal Team • A Template will be used to guide organization and content of the plan. In proposing a plan, the teacher will identify at least one goal they wish to work toward.
	<p>Professional Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform Professional Service (see table 5) as proposed in the plan • Individuals may only receive credit for Professional Service commitments for which the employee has not received compensation from the District. Professional Service may not be used to supplant any activities for which the district provides a stipend. Generally the acceptable activities occur beyond the contract day. Acceptable service shall be determined by the Building Appraisal Team. • The required time components are listed Table 5 below.

Table 5	
Professional Service*	
Categories	Possible Examples
Committee Membership	Any district/building committee formed. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Committee • Calendar Committee • Policy Committee • Curriculum Committee • Negotiations Committee • Insurance Committee • Student Assistance Teams (SAT Teams) • IEP outside contract day.
Student Assistance/Enrichment/Reinforcement	Projects that may occur outside the normal school year. AM study time, after-school study time, etc.
Peer Support	Appraisal Team, General mentoring, etc.
Student Activities	Speech and Debate Judge, Dance, Prom, Winter Carnival, Home Coming, Clock Workers, Ticket Takers, Track Meet Asst.
Curriculum Outreach	Working with other professionals to develop/enhance curriculum.
Local, State, and/or National Leadership Roles	PEA Executive Board, A.G.A.T.E. etc.

* The items listed in this table are general suggestions and are subject to change as additional activities are considered.

Note: Positions that are on the existing stipend schedule may not be supplanted by someone wanting to perform the duty as part of their Professional Service. The only exception is when a stipend position is advertised and no one who is “qualified” applies for the position. In that limited case then an individual may volunteer as part of their Professional Service. The following year the position shall be advertised.

4.2.1 Time Requirements

Professional Service activities must also meet the following criteria:

- Professional Service frequency requirements:
 - Rungs 1-9: (10 hrs.)
 - Rungs 10-19: (20 hrs.)
 - Rungs 20+: (25 hrs.)
- Teachers can not use these hours in lieu of the 12 hours required MFPE day
- Professional Service must benefit students, school or district.
- Professional Service is different from and does not count towards the Professional Development requirements.

- The Professional Service commitment will be agreed upon, on an annual basis, by the teacher and the appropriate Appraisal Team. Upon mutual agreement these commitments may be modified during the year. Modification can be made by choosing another service option from the list of previously accepted items or with permission by the building administrator.

4.3 Timeline

Successful completion of the Professional Advancement Strand requires careful adherence to the deadlines described below. A teacher's failure to meet deadlines for any stages of the Professional Advancement Strand may result in the teacher being moved to the Accountability Strand.

4.4 Deadlines for Submission of Professional Services and Professional Advancement Plan

Teachers may submit plans on any submission date. Any plan that contemplates action during the summer months must submit during the first submission dates in order to have those activities be approved by the team prior to action being taken. In the event an employee submits a plan under submission date one or two and the plan is subsequently rejected by the appraisal team they may resubmit at submission date two or three.

Submission Date One: On or before 1st Friday in April. The appropriate appraisal team will provide a response within 20 days of the 1st Friday in April.

Submission Date Two: On or before the date in June which will be one week from the last day of school. The appropriate appraisal team will provide a response within 20 days of that date.

Submission Date Three: On or before 1st Friday in October. The appropriate appraisal team will provide a response within 20 days of the 1st Friday in October.

Deadline for Completion

All documentation, forms and supporting evidence must be submitted to the building PPAS team on or before the date in June which will be one week from the last day of school. Anything submitted after that time/date will not be considered by the appraisal team. Documentation can be submitted in electronic or paper form according to the building team's preference.

The appropriate Appraisal team will meet to review and determine if the Professional Advancement Plan and Professional Service components were satisfactorily completed within 20 days of due date.

Teachers on the Professional Advancement Strand shall (1) develop their professional goals, (2) informally meet with their supervising administrator(s) to discuss these goals and (3) submit the finalized plan to the building administrator on their Appraisal Team.

Tenured teachers choosing not to submit a Professional Advancement plan will be evaluated but will not advance on the pay ladder. (For information on Accountability Strand procedures, see section 4, above.)

Teachers and their supervising administrators may discuss areas to be investigated, resources needed, colleagues to be involved, methods for collecting data, and/or methods for evaluating progress toward the goals, as applicable. During this meeting, supervisors shall act as advisors with the goal of assisting teachers in clarifying and refining their proposed goals and methods. The supervisor may also assist in developing evaluation and data-collection methods, identifying required resources, and ensuring allocation of such resources.

Teachers in April or June whose plans are not approved by the Appraisal Team may, at their discretion, resubmit a revised plan during the October submission date. Those who only submit for the October submission shall not have the opportunity for resubmission.

In the event the teacher fails to have a plan approved for the school year they will not advance on the salary ladder.

4.5 Final Report

Final Reports (i.e., year-end progress reports) and accompanying materials shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Reports must be typed.
- ~~Teachers may submit packets electronically. Those who choose to submit paper versions shall provide a copy of the complete final packet (described immediately below) to the District main office.~~
- Final submissions must include (1) approximately one - two page reflection/summary of the Professional Advancement Plan goals and activities, (2) the final progress report, and the (3) professional service record. Some teachers' plans may result in a product as well; if is impractical to duplicate this product, only one copy or example need be submitted with the final packets.
- Final reports are to be submitted according to the timeline in section 4.3.

4.5.1 Sample Professional Advancement Strand Documentation

Teachers may wish to collect all materials relevant to the teacher's Professional Advancement Plan each year. It may contain the following, supplemented by any other items appropriate to a particular teacher's plan:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--|
| • Annual goals | • Data | • Data gathering methods |
| • Notes from meetings | • Resources needed | • Education course list |
| • Course syllabi | • Transcripts | • Mid-year and year-end progress reports |

4.6 Other Professional Advancement Strand Guidelines and Procedures

This section describes additional guidelines and procedures applying to Professional Advancement Strand teachers and their supervisors.

4.6.1 Professional Advancement Strand Principles

The success of the Professional Advancement Strand is contingent on teachers' recognition of their responsibility for their own professional growth and on their desire to expand their knowledge and effectiveness. The success of the Professional Advancement Strand is also contingent on administrators' recognition of their role as instructional leaders dedicated to the professional growth of their staff.

4.6.2 Guidance for Supervisors

Supervisors are encouraged to assist in coordinating teachers' efforts toward common goals that may exist in the building. The administrator is further encouraged to provide teachers with any information and resources that may bear on their goal attainment.

4.6.3 Experimentation and Flexibility Encouraged

Research recognizes that there are varying teaching strategies, learning and teaching styles, and lesson plan formats. To promote maximum professional growth, experimentation and flexibility are encouraged in the development of Professional Advancement Plan goals. However, plans must still comply with all district curriculum guidelines and other applicable rules and regulations.

4.6.4 Peer Involvement

Teachers may solicit colleagues' assistance with observations, data collecting, or other collaborative efforts. Each teacher is responsible for submitting their own plan/project. Submission of duplicative final reports is not allowed.

4.6.5 Unsatisfactory Performance

If, prior to March 1st during a teacher's placement on the Professional Advancement Strand, an immediate supervisor deems that teacher's performance to be unsatisfactory, the teacher may be moved to the Accountability Strand.

At anytime during the year a teacher may be placed on a Mandatory Plan of Improvement. A teacher placed on a Mandatory Plan of Improvement may still advance on the salary schedule assuming they meet all of the requirements specified in their professional advancement plan.

It is conceivable that all stated goals may not be reached in a given year for a variety of reasons. The district and PEA agree that analysis of such circumstances can also be a learning experience; at the Appraisal Team's discretion, failure to achieve stated goals shall not necessarily be grounds for being ineligible for promotion.

Appendix A: Professional Advancement Plan Rubric

Professional Advancement Plan Review Checklist

Polson School District

(All sections to be filled in by the review committee)

Component	Initial			Comments
A. Goals	Yes	No	NA	
Are the goals of the plan relevant to the district's mission or goals, or to National, State, or District standards?				
Did the educator describe the goal(s) of the plan and the needs that support the goal(s)? (supported by data, observation, etc.)				
B. Plan Description	Yes	No	NA	
Did the educator describe the situation and demographic data? (numbers/grade level of students, subject and/or specialty areas, etc.)				
Did the educator describe how the plan will benefit him/herself as a professional?				
Did the educator describe how the plan will benefit students, colleagues, their school or the district?				
Did the educator describe the objectives of their plan?				
C. References	Yes	No	NA	
Did the educator provide references for "best practices" upon plan completion?				
D. Plan Timeline	Yes	No	NA	
Initial: Did the educator indicate a timeline for accomplishing the objectives?				
Final: Was the project completed?				

Component	Initial			Comments
E. Educational Plan	Yes	No	NA	
Did the educator describe the specific educational components that are a part of the plan? (professional development, workshops, action research, college coursework, books or articles, webinars, etc.)				
F. Reflection	Yes	No	NA	
Did the educator summarize the results of their plan?				
G. Professional Service Component	Yes	No	NA	
Did the educator describe how they are going to meet the professional Service Component? (Log attached at completion)				
Does the committee approve the submitted hours?				
Were the professional service hours completed?				