Professional Education Competence Program

OVERVIEW

PEC Program Purpose Statement:

The Highlands County Professional Education Competence (PEC) Program, aligned with the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices and the district’s approved Instructional Performance Appraisal Instrument, will provide a program of structured support and relevant professional development for the purposes of enhancing teacher effectiveness to improve student achievement.

The Program goals are as follows:

- Ensure that all PEC participants meet the Department of Education’s criteria for a Professional Educator’s Certificate through participation and successful completion of the program
- Provide for development, demonstration and evaluation of the professional education competence for each teacher in the program
- Ensure that members of the supervisory team and support staff have been trained and understand the observation and performance appraisal process as well as instructional practices as defined in the FEAPs
- Provide the support needed at the school level to ensure the seamless operation of the PEC Program facilitation
- Review and assess the program’s success and/or challenges on an annual basis for the purposes of continuous improvement

I. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

A. Governance

The Superintendent, on behalf of the School Board, assigned responsibility for the development and implementation of the Professional Education Competence (PEC) Program to the Director of Human Resources, Recruitment and Professional Development (HRRPD).

The Director of HRRPD is responsible for the development of the plan in collaboration with district and school-based administrators, with input from experienced accomplished teachers and other district/community stakeholders.

The Director will monitor, review and revise relevant policies, procedures, processes and activities to ensure effective operation of the program.

It is the Director’s responsibility to conduct the program in such a way that it will support and enhance the overall educational program of the district.
Under the supervision of the principal/site supervisor, the program shall be implemented in each school that has a PEC Program participant determined through the evaluation process that requires successful completion of the PEC Program. The principal/site supervisor will assign appropriate support staff as required for each new teacher.

Upon completion of the program, the principal will submit recommendations, together with the portfolio containing supportive data/evidence, to the Director of HRRPD who will evaluate successful program completion (or non-completion). The Superintendent will verify by personal letter to the participant that the teacher has satisfactorily completed the PEC Program.

B. **Program Design**

Mastery of professional preparation and educational competence through the PEC Program is required to be eligible for a Professional Educator Certificate (F.S. 1012.56). New teachers not meeting requirements for a Professional Educator’s Certificate who have not completed a teacher education program, internship or demonstrated one year of successful teaching experience must participate in and successfully complete a district PEC program.

The program design provides for a support team to include a Peer-teacher, an initial formative observation completed during the first thirty working days following the date of employment, formative observations based on the performance appraisal instrument (three minimum per semester), informal classroom visitation/observations by the peer-teacher (two), and a final formative observation. Successful demonstration of the competencies outlined in the Educational Accomplished Practices in conjunction with the performance appraisal domains and components will be reviewed at stated intervals throughout the school year. Mastery of the required professional education competence must be demonstrated within the first year of employment (unless extenuating circumstances warrant an extension).

C. **Role and Responsibilities of the New Teacher**

The new teacher is the nucleus of an in-school team which consists of that new teacher and a specifically assigned Peer teacher. The new teacher is expected to fulfill the same duties and responsibilities generally assigned to teachers in the school setting. Such duties will be assigned by the supervising principal who will clarify any specific expectations of the new teacher/PEC participant. The new teacher has full responsibility for the instruction of all assigned students. As a participant in the PEC Program, the teacher is expected to make the support staff members aware of concerns and needs and to seek clarification of methods and procedures as necessary. Additionally, the new teacher has the following responsibilities:
1. To view the program as a positive means of professional growth.

2. To cooperatively schedule and participate in classroom observations and the formative assessment process with the peer teacher.

3. To meet with the assigned peer-teacher to review district/school operations, sign mentor-mentee contract, discuss peer-teacher guidelines, schedule future/ongoing meetings and make every effort to support the mentor-mentee relationship.

4. To participate in the collaborative development and implementation of an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) and work toward meeting stated student achievement and professional development goals.

5. To participate in group and individualized professional development activities and learning communities.

6. To effectively demonstrate the competencies required for Professional Educator Certification, providing support evidence as required.

7. To assist in developing the professional portfolio.

8. To maintain a log of Professional Development Activities reflecting program competency (see Section III Program Requirements for instructions to access ERO).

D. **Roles and Responsibilities of the Support Team**

1. The support team shall consist of the principal/site supervisor (or administrator designee), the assigned peer-teacher, and/or additional school staff as assigned by supervising Principal. The Principal and/or administrative designee will play a major role in the formative and summative process. **The administrator should perform the initial formative observation within the first six weeks of employment as assigned by the supervising principal.**

   The building-level administrator and members of the program participant’s support team shall:

   a. Participate in appropriate support team training activities.

   b. Conduct informal formative observations in the beginning teacher’s classroom to identify strengths and developmental needs and provide recommendations for improvement.

   c. Provide feedback and instruction to the beginning teacher.
d. Participate in the development and implementation of the beginning teacher's Professional Development Plan(s).

e. Assist the new teacher in meeting deadlines.

f. Provide the new teacher with resources and materials deemed necessary by the support team and approved by the supervising principal.

g. Oversees the portfolio and ensures that requirements are being met.

2. The peer teacher is expected to be accessible to the new teacher on a day-to-day basis and to provide informal formative support as needed in making effective use of pre- and post-school time. The peer teacher's responsibilities are as follows:

a. Participate in appropriate/required training activities.

b. Participate in all appropriate support team activities.

c. Assist the new teacher with classroom management and behavior intervention strategies.

d. Conduct a minimum of three formative observations in the new teacher's classroom which should include pre and post conferences (use classroom visitation/observation forms from Peer-Mentor Teacher Program Notebook).

e. Conduct frequent informal observations in the new teacher's classroom to help identify strengths and developmental needs and provide recommendations for improvement.

f. Provide feedback, guidance, instruction and counseling to the beginning teacher and maintain a positive mentor-mentee relationship.

g. Participate, if requested, in the development and implementation of the new teacher's Individual Professional Development Plan(s).

h. Assist the new teacher in meeting deadlines.

3. Other support team members may add various dimensions of support to the new teacher. As directed by the principal/site supervisor, other support team members shall:

a. Participate in all appropriate support team training activities.
b. Conduct informal observations in the new teacher's classroom to identify strengths and developmental needs and provide recommendations for improvement.

c. Provide feedback, instruction and counseling to the new teacher.

d. Participate; if requested, in the development and implementation of the new teacher's Individual Professional Development Plan(s).

4. The principal/site supervisor shall be responsible for the new teacher’s program facilitation and shall participate in the Professional Education Competence Program planning and implementation at the school level. The principal shall monitor the program in his/her school to assure a smooth operation of the process and shall make modifications as needed. The building principal will continually communicate with the Director of HRRPD and perform the following:

a. Participate in appropriate program training activities and updates.

b. Assign the peer teacher and any other support team members and designate their responsibilities.

c. Complete the initial and final summative evaluation of each program participant.

d. Verify that the new teacher has satisfactorily completed the program requirements and by administrative sign-off, has demonstrated professional education competence.

e. Submit a recommendation, accompanied by the portfolio and any/all evidence of successful completion, to the Director of HRRPD for final review/approval by the Superintendent.

E. **Role and Responsibilities of Other Support Personnel Not Specifically Assigned to the Professional Education Competence Program**

1. Directors, Coordinators, and Resource Teachers will, when deemed appropriate:

a. Serve on a support team as requested by the principal/site supervisor.

b. Participate in all support staff training activities and provide training in areas of expertise.
2. Teachers in every school are perceived to be supportive of new teachers. Each teacher is expected to be involved in supporting the experiences of the new teacher in his/her school.

3. Paraprofessionals, volunteers and support staff will be made aware of ways in which they can support the experiences of the beginning teacher. The beginning teacher will learn to utilize the skills and knowledge of various district and school-based personnel to successfully complete the program and help to enhance their skills in the classroom.

F. **Training Personnel**

The Director of HRRPD will develop and coordinate an orientation/training program to assist in the facilitation and implementation of the PEC Program.

1. **Support Team:** The members of the support team will participate in inservice activities covering all aspects of the PEC Program. Training will include the following:

   a. An orientation to the PEC Program.

   b. An understanding and demonstration of the Educational Accomplished Practices, competencies and requirements necessary for obtaining a Professional Educator’s Certificate.

   c. Special skill development and practice in the following areas:

      (1) Interpersonal Communication
      (2) Problem Solving
      (3) Team-building
      (4) Conflict-management
      (5) Observation Skills
      (6) Data Analysis
      (7) Performance Appraisal Domains/Components

   d. Instruction and practice in use of procedures and instruments to be applied to the assessment process using the formative instruments.

   e. Survey and practice of procedures to be used in the development of the portfolio.

   f. On completion of the training, all support team members will understand the required competencies as determined by the training consultant and program requirements.
g. Training updates will be required as determined by the principal/site supervisor or Director of HRRPD.

2. **New Teacher:** The new teacher will be involved in the following professional development/inservice activities:

   a. A district orientation to policies, procedures, services and personnel (NTO) which will also include requirements for Professional Educator Certification.

   b. An orientation which will include the following topics:

      (1) PEC program statement of purpose and guidelines

      (2) Program timeline

      (3) Explanation of support team, peer teacher and new teacher roles and responsibilities.


      (5) Information regarding relevant professional development and training sessions

   c. Training activities will be scheduled according to the need to review the required competencies and the method of developing a portfolio to meet program requirements.

   d. The school-based orientation, in service activities, or experiences will include the review of School Improvement Plans and other data/information pertinent to the PEC Program requirements.

G. **Length of Program**

The PEC Program must be completed within the first year of employment. In the case where a teacher requests medical leave or is unable to complete the program within one year due to extenuating circumstances, a letter of request that provides support documentation and/or reasons for extension shall be addressed to the Supervising Principal, Director of HRRPD and the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall make the final decision regarding extension of the program. In the case of denial of the request, the program participant will be required to completely restart the program upon return to employment.

H. **Compensation for Program Participants**
Program participants will be hired through approved district procedures and will receive compensation equivalent to that of other instructional staff of equal experience and degree (training) according to the SBHC Board approved salary schedule.

II. **CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION**

A. An individual employed as a member of The SBHC’s instructional staff after July 1, 1997 who does not hold or is not eligible to hold a valid Florida Professional Educator’s Certificate shall become a participant unless the individual:

1. Has completed an approved Florida teacher education program and internship.
2. Has completed a teacher education training program and has had at least 1 year of successful full-time teaching experience in another state.
3. Is eligible for a professional certificate based upon reciprocity.
4. Qualifies for and elects to participate in the district’s Alternative Certification Training Program.

B. The teacher is employed full-time (or at least the equivalent of four hours per day), receives contracted instructional pay based on the SBHC Board approved salary schedule; if hired for less than four hours per day, the teacher may volunteer time to meet the four-hour requirement in order to participate in the PEC Program.

III. **COMPONENTS OF THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMPETENCE PROGRAM.**

A. **Participant Identification**

The HRRPD Department will review and evaluate new instructional employees’ records/credentials to identify participants who meet requirements for the program and principals/site supervisors will be notified by HRRPD of program participants.

B. **Peer-Teacher/Support Team Assignment**

The principal/site supervisor will assign the new PEC Program teacher a support team consisting of the principal/site-administrator and a peer-teacher. The peer-teacher must be trained in Clinical Education, hold a Professional Educator’s Certificate, and have at least three years of successful teaching experience. The peer-teacher will provide support, assistance, coaching feedback, and model “best-practices;” additional team members may be assigned as needed.
C. **Planning Conference/Orientation**

At the beginning of the PEC Program, a conference will be held with the new teacher and the principal/site supervisor and all members of the support team. The purpose of the conference will be to review the PEC Program process (i.e., reviewing the PEC Program Portfolio guidelines and requirements, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the new teacher and support team), to review the certification competencies and leadership standards, to review the formative/summative observation and evaluation process, to plan and prepare for the first formative observation, and to address any concerns and expectations of the new teacher and the support team.

D. **Initial and Final Summative Observation**

1. The principal/site supervisor or designee conducts an initial summative observation (with a pre and post conference) of the teacher's instructional performance during the first six weeks following the date of employment. This observation is for the purpose of diagnosing and identifying strengths and areas needing improvement.

2. Ongoing formative observations will be conducted by the supervising principal or designee for the purpose of immediate and constructive feedback.

3. For the purposes of comparative analysis of determining progress regarding the teacher’s instructional practices and performance, the final summative observation should be conducted prior to the last annual contract summative performance appraisal.

E. **Performance Appraisals**

1. A minimum of two annual contract performance appraisals will be conducted by the Supervising Principal/administrative designee and assigned Peer Evaluator, when applicable. (F.S. 1012.34)

2. Refer to Guidelines for Administering and Implementing the Performance Appraisal System for Instructional Personnel for assessment procedures, rating scale definitions, data collection sources, and use of assessment data for personnel decisions.

3. A copy of the new teacher’s performance appraisals will be included in the portfolio behind the appropriate tab. Original copies will be sent to HR (see HR timeline) with a copy retained at the school site. **Teachers’ performance appraisals are not open for public record during the current year or prior year of teaching experience, therefore performance appraisals should not be placed in the PEC Portfolio**
F. **Peer-Teacher Observations**

1. A minimum of three Classroom Visitation/Observations should be conducted and forms completed from the *Mentoring and Peer Teacher Program Portfolio*. A supplemental observation form may be added and completed if necessary.

G. **Professional Development Plans**

The Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) is designed to assist each teacher in enhancing teaching skills and developing goals that impact student achievement resulting in demonstration of performance of the competencies required for issuance of a Professional Educator’s Certificate.

1. The beginning teacher's Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) will be a collaborative effort on behalf of the PEC participant and the Supervising Principal/designee; may also include other support team members.

2. From the results of the first summative observation and the informal observations by the peer teacher and other support team members, competencies not being satisfactorily demonstrated will be identified by the support team. The PEC participant and the administrator will collaboratively develop an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) that will aid the new teacher in developing skills through targeted professional development that will satisfactorily demonstrate the required competencies. Student achievement goals on the IPDP should be rigorous and relevant.

3. The teacher should expect regular observations preceded and followed by constructive conferences. The teacher should leave each session with an understanding of how he/she is accomplishing goals and objectives and specific steps for improvement.

4. A copy of the Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) is to be kept in the beginning teacher's portfolio as well as a copy retained at the school site by the administrator. Adherence to HR timelines regarding development of the IPDP is mandatory. The plan will be reviewed during each conference to assess the teacher’s progress.

5. The teacher and Supervising Administrator will sign off on the IPDP form upon final completion (see HR timeline).

H. **Professional Development Activity Log**
A log of Professional Education Competence (PEC) Program activities shall be kept by the teacher as directed by the principal/site supervisor. Careful effort should be given to including relevant prescriptive professional development training activities, workshops, conferences, and events that provide support evidence of meeting program requirements, IPDP goals/objectives and professional educator competencies. The participant’s Electronic Registrar Online (ERO) inservice transcript may be used to support this requirement.

I. **FLORIDA Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAP’s) Competency Documentation**

All PEC Program competency requirements in the performance appraisal Domains 1-4 and FEAP’s must be successfully demonstrated and completed to meet requirements for a Professional Educator’s Certificate (refer to Section III- Program Requirements).

PEC support team members may review and assess the competencies as they are demonstrated. Exhibits, products, or artifacts that verify competency demonstration (if not verified through interview, observation or assessment) must be placed in the portfolio. The Harry Wong on-line Classroom Management course is a required component as well as documentation of a completed lesson plan taught successfully.

The principal/site supervisor will verify program completion and successful demonstration of the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAP’s) and competencies required for a Professional Educator’s Certificate on both the checklist documenting method/date of demonstration and the final Program Completion Form.

J. **Final Assessment**

An end-of-program conference shall be scheduled. The support team and the new teacher will review the portfolio and complete the PEC Program Competency Demonstration Checklist indicating that the program is completed and that all documentary, support evidence is contained in the portfolio.

The principal/site supervisor will complete the Program Completion Form verifying that the new teacher has satisfactorily demonstrated professional education competence.

The portfolio will be forwarded to the Director of HRRPD for review and approval; if approved, the **Verification of Demonstration of Professional Education Competence (CT-118) Form** will be electronically transmitted to the Department of Education’s (DOE) Bureau of Educator Certification. When all certificate requirements are met and application for the professional educator’s certificate has been received by DOE, the Professional Educator’s
Certificate will be issued.

K. **Portfolio**

A portfolio shall be maintained for each teacher participating in the program. The portfolio, consisting of a notebook and its contents, should be maintained by the PEC participant in a secure location. The new teacher, principal and support team shall have access to the portfolio.

All PEC Program teacher portfolios will be submitted to the Director of HRRPD at the conclusion of the PEC Program for review and storage. Incomplete portfolios should be submitted to the Director of HRRPD for storage. All portfolios will be stored at the school board office for three years based on records retention guidelines.

The portfolio shall include, but is not limited to:

- Title page
- Table of Contents
- Welcome letter
- Participant information form
- PEC Program Purpose Statement
- PEC Program Components
- Assignments based on Performance Appraisal Framework for Teaching Domains 1-4 and Florida Educator Accomplished Practices
- Lesson Plan
- Documentation of completion of Harry Wong on-line Classroom Management course
- IPDP and Goals Supporting Evidence
- Professional Development Transcript (ERO)
- Diagnostic Observations and Assessments (Informal and Summative Observations, Summative Performance Appraisals, Peer-Teacher/Evaluator Classroom Visitation/Observation Forms)
- Administrative Program Approval
- Additional documentation to support demonstration of professional educator competencies

**NOTE:** Based on the specific assignment, support documentation may include evidence of developmental need area activities, support services recommended and provided, lesson plans, professional development logs, records of parent/teacher conferences and communications, reflective papers, and/or other prepared materials and assignments relevant to the program competencies.

**IV. SUPPORT TEAM COMPOSITION AND CRITERIA**
A. Composition of the Professional Education Competence (PEC) Program Support Team

The support team will be selected by the principal/site supervisor and will consist of at least two persons:

1. Principal/site supervisor,
2. Peer teacher and Peer Evaluator, when applicable.

The principal/site supervisor may assign additional members to the support team.

B. Criteria for Eligibility

1. Peer Teacher

   The peer teacher shall be an experienced teacher who possesses the special knowledge/skills and competencies needed to provide adequate support for the development of beginning teachers. In addition, peer teachers should meet the following requirements prior to assignment:
   
   • Have a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience
   • Hold a valid Florida professional educator’s certificate
   • Teach at the same level, same subject area and/or same service area whenever possible
   • Receive Clinical Educator Training (within the last five years prior to peer teacher assignment date)
   • Participate in peer teacher training
   • Attend Peer-Mentor Teacher Program Notebook Orientation

   In the event that a peer teacher with the above criteria is not available, the principal may request a building-level peer teacher who, in the principal's opinion, is prepared to assist the beginning teacher's transition into the school and district.

   No peer teacher or district-level administrator will be permitted to serve on the support staff for more than two beginning teachers at any one time. In critical situations, the superintendent may waive this restriction. (See HCEA/SBHC Agreement for negotiated provisions affecting peer teacher selection.)

2. Principal/Site Supervisor

   The Principal/site supervisor (district department head) must hold a valid professional educator’s certificate in an administrative or related area.

3. Other Support Team Members should be experienced teachers and/or
administrators who are professionally trained (Clinical Educator Training, Peer-Teacher Training, etc.) They may include, but are not limited to, professional development specialists, curriculum directors, resource teachers, instructional supervisors or specialists.

C. **Conflict Resolution**

Should a conflict arise between a new teacher and a member of the support team that cannot be resolved between the affected parties, the new teacher may appeal to the principal for resolution of the conflict. The support team member may be replaced at the principal's recommendation if necessary. If resolution cannot be reached the Director of HRRPD will consult the principal to resolve.

D. **Expanded Support Staff**

In the event that the support team determines that a new teacher is not making satisfactory progress, additional support may be requested. The request will be directed through the principal.

Once a plan is developed for additional support, the new teacher shall be notified in writing of the request, the reasons for it, and the proposed strategy for improvement. Copies of the new teacher’s written notification of the assignment and documentation of the request and of the assignment shall be placed in the portfolio. The additional team member(s) shall participate in support team meetings and shall sign all appropriate documentation regarding performance competencies.

V. **PROGRAM EVALUATION FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

The Director of HRRPD shall be responsible for periodically reviewing the PEC Program and recommending to the Superintendent substantive changes, updates and revisions needed to keep the program relevant to the current educational climate. Directives regarding compliance with state and district policies and requirements as well as legislative changes will be incorporated into the program design annually to be submitted for school board approval.