

**PLANS FOR GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT
OF LICENSED EMPLOYEES**

Policy Code: **7811**

1 The [Transylvania County Board of Education \(the “board”\)](#) expects all professionally licensed
2 employees to maintain high levels of performance. If an employee does not meet this standard,
3 the superintendent and administrative staff shall address any identified performance or other
4 deficiencies through appropriate means, including placing the employee on a monitored growth,
5 directed growth, or mandatory improvement plan when required by state law, State Board policy,
6 or this policy, or when otherwise deemed necessary.
7

8 Growth and mandatory improvement plans as defined by law and this policy are valuable tools to
9 promote the professional development of licensed employees. The board recognizes, however,
10 that not all conduct and performance issues require the development of a plan. Administrators
11 and supervisory personnel are authorized to address inappropriate conduct and/or inadequate
12 performance using such other lawful means as they may deem appropriate. This policy shall not
13 be interpreted to limit in any way the authority of administrators or other supervisory personnel
14 to direct and reprimand licensed employees for inappropriate conduct or inadequate
15 performance.
16

17 The superintendent shall develop procedures in accordance with state law, State Board
18 guidelines, and this policy as necessary to carry out the board’s directives.
19

20 **A. DEFINITIONS**

- 21
- 22 1. As used in this policy, “teacher” means an individual defined as a teacher in G.S.
23 115C-325(a)(6) (for career status teachers) or G.S. 115C-325.1(6) (for non-career
24 status teachers).
25
 - 26 2. As used in this policy, “licensed employee(s)” includes school administrators as
27 defined in G.S. 115C-325.1(5) and teachers.
28

29 **B. INDIVIDUAL, MONITORED, AND DIRECTED GROWTH PLANS**

30

- 31 **1. Use of Growth Plans**

32

- 33 **a. Teachers**

34
35 Teachers who receive an overall rating of at least “proficient” on all
36 standards on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Rubric as indicated
37 on the Teacher Summary Rating Form shall develop an individual growth
38 plan designed to improve performance on specifically identified standards
39 and elements.
40

41 A teacher who is performing below a proficient level on the Teacher
42 Summary Rating Form shall be placed on a monitored growth plan or a
43 directed growth plan unless dismissal, demotion, nonrenewal, or

44 placement on a mandatory improvement plan (see Section C, below) is
45 warranted. A monitored growth plan developed in accordance with State
46 Board policy is required for a teacher who is rated “developing” on one or
47 more standards of the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Rubric. State
48 Board policy also requires that a teacher who is rated “not demonstrated”
49 on any standard or who is rated “developing” on any standard for two
50 sequential years be placed on a directed growth plan. The superintendent
51 may establish other criteria that will be deemed evidence that performance
52 is below a proficient level or otherwise represents unsatisfactory or below
53 standard performance and warrants placement on either a monitored
54 growth plan or a directed growth plan.
55

56 Unless otherwise limited by state law or State Board policy, the principal
57 is authorized to place a teacher on a monitored or directed growth plan or
58 other plan of improvement at any point during the school year if the
59 principal determines that the teacher is performing below the expected
60 level.
61

62 **b. School Administrators**

63 Professional growth plans will be developed for school administrators as
64 provided in State Board policy. A professional growth plan will include
65 mutually agreed upon performance goals and recommendations based
66 upon the school administrator’s self-assessment, the consolidated
67 assessment and the summary evaluation using the *North Carolina School*
68 *Executive; Principal and Assistant Principal Evaluation Process*.
69 Development of the professional growth plan will be discussed at a
70 meeting between the school administrator and the superintendent or
71 designee when completing the annual evaluation process.
72
73

74 The superintendent may move to dismiss or demote a licensed employee whether or not
75 the employee has been first placed on a growth or other improvement plan. See policy
76 7930, Professional Employees: Demotion and Dismissal.
77

78 **2. Components of Growth Plans**

79 Individual growth plans may contain, but are not limited to, any of the
80 components listed below. However, monitored or directed growth plans must
81 include at least the following components.
82

83 **a. Identification of Deficiencies**
84
85

86 All performance deficiencies, including all specific standards and
87 elements of the Teacher Evaluation Rubric identified for improvement
88 during the teacher’s evaluation, must be identified and addressed in the
89 growth plan.

90
91 **b. Performance Expectations and Goals**

92
93 For each problem identified, the growth plan must include a statement of
94 the expected level of performance and/or other goals to be accomplished.

95
96 **c. Strategies**

97
98 The growth plan must set forth a strategy or strategies designed to correct
99 each identified deficiency. The strategies should be specific and clearly
100 state the activities the teacher should undertake to achieve the expected
101 level of performance. The strategies also should identify all individuals
102 responsible for implementing the plan.

103
104 **d. Dates for Monitoring and Completion**

105
106 The growth plan must include dates upon which the teacher’s progress
107 under the plan will be reviewed and the date by which performance is to
108 be improved to the expected level. Under a monitored growth plan, the
109 teacher must achieve proficiency within one school year. A directed
110 growth plan may provide for a shorter period to achieve proficiency, not to
111 exceed one school year.

112
113 **3. Review of Growth Plans**

114
115 Individual and professional growth plans should be reviewed at least annually
116 with the licensed employee’s supervisor and/or the principal, the superintendent,
117 or their designees, as applicable.

118
119 In the case of a teacher’s monitored or directed growth plan, once the designated
120 time period for completion of a plan has elapsed, the principal or supervisor shall
121 review the teacher’s performance, including the results of any subsequent
122 evaluation and determine whether the teacher continues to perform below the
123 expected level in any area or whether the teacher’s performance has improved
124 sufficiently. If the teacher’s performance remains below proficient, the principal
125 or supervisor shall recommend to the superintendent one of the following:

- 126
127 a. the board dismiss the teacher or demote or transfer the teacher to a
128 position in which the teacher can be successful;

- 129
130 b. the teacher be placed on a mandatory improvement plan in accordance
131 with the provisions of Section C, below; or
132
133 c. the teacher be moved to a new monitored or directed growth plan or
134 continue on a previous growth plan that has been revised as necessary,
135 provided the principal or supervisor determines that:
136
137 1) the teacher’s continuing performance problems are not having an
138 adverse impact on student learning or the school environment, or
139
140 2) the teacher is making good progress toward improvement in
141 deficient areas and is likely to improve to an acceptable level
142 within a reasonable, additional time period.
143

144 **C. MANDATORY IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

145
146 A mandatory improvement plan is an instrument designed to improve a licensed
147 employee’s performance by providing the employee with notice of specific performance
148 areas that have substantial deficiencies and a set of strategies, including the specific
149 support to be provided to the employee, so that he or she may satisfactorily resolve such
150 deficiencies within a reasonable timeframe.
151

152 The use of mandatory improvement plans as provided in this policy is discretionary and
153 will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Nothing in this policy will be interpreted so
154 as to require the use of mandatory improvement plans in addition to, or in lieu of, growth
155 plans or other disciplinary action, including dismissal from employment as provided by
156 law.
157

158 **1. Initiating a Mandatory Improvement Plan**

159
160 **a. Licensed Employees in Low-Performing Schools**

161
162 If a licensed employee in a low-performing school receives a rating on any
163 standard on an evaluation that is below proficient or otherwise represents
164 unsatisfactory or below standard performance in an area that the licensed
165 employee was expected to demonstrate, the individual or team that
166 conducted the evaluation shall recommend to the superintendent that (i)
167 the employee receive a mandatory improvement plan designed to improve
168 the employee’s performance or (ii) the superintendent recommend to the
169 board that the employee be dismissed or demoted. If the individual or
170 team that conducted the evaluation elects not to make either of the above
171 recommendations, the said individual or team shall notify the

172 superintendent of this decision. The superintendent shall determine
173 whether to develop a mandatory improvement plan or to recommend a
174 dismissal proceeding.
175

176 **b. Teachers in Schools Not Identified as Low-Performing**

177
178 If, in an observation report or year-end evaluation, a teacher in a school
179 not identified as low-performing receives a rating that is below proficient
180 or otherwise represents unsatisfactory or below standard performance on
181 any standard that the teacher was expected to demonstrate, the principal
182 may place the employee on a mandatory improvement plan. The
183 mandatory improvement plan will be utilized only if the superintendent or
184 designee determines that an individual, monitored or directed growth plan
185 would not satisfactorily address the deficiencies.
186

187 **c. Any Licensed Employees Engaging in Inappropriate Conduct or**
188 **Performance**

189
190 A principal may recommend to the superintendent or designee that a
191 licensed employee be placed immediately on a mandatory improvement
192 plan if the employee engages in inappropriate conduct or performs
193 inadequately to such a degree that the conduct or performance causes
194 substantial harm to the educational environment, but immediate dismissal
195 or demotion of the employee is not appropriate. The principal must
196 document the exigent reason for immediately instituting such a plan.
197

198 **2. Components of the Plan**

199
200 A mandatory improvement plan for any licensed employee must include the
201 following components.
202

203 **a. Identification of Deficiencies**

204
205 The performance areas in which the employee is deficient must be
206 identified and addressed in the mandatory improvement plan.
207

208 **b. Performance Expectations**

209
210 For each problem identified, the plan must include a statement of the
211 expected level of performance.
212

213 **c. Strategies**
214

215 The plan must establish a strategy or strategies designed to correct each
216 identified deficiency. The strategies should be specific and clearly state
217 the activities the employee should undertake to achieve the expected level
218 of performance and the specific support to be provided to the employee.
219 The strategies also should identify all individuals responsible for
220 implementing the plan.

221
222 **d. Dates for Monitoring and Completion**

223
224 The plan must include dates upon which the employee's progress under
225 the plan will be reviewed and the date by which performance is to be
226 improved to the expected level.

227
228 **3. Development and Implementation of the Plan**

229
230 **a. Licensed Employees in Low-Performing Schools**

231
232 When directed by the superintendent, a mandatory improvement plan to
233 improve the performance of a licensed employee will be developed by the
234 person who evaluated the licensed employee or the employee's supervisor,
235 unless the evaluation was conducted by an assistance team. If the
236 evaluation was conducted by an assistance team, that team shall develop
237 the mandatory improvement plan in collaboration with the employee's
238 supervisor. Mandatory improvement plans will be designed to be
239 completed within 90 instructional days or before the beginning of the next
240 school year.

241
242 **b. Teachers in Schools Not Identified As Low-Performing**

243
244 When a principal decides to put a teacher on a mandatory improvement
245 plan, the principal shall develop the plan in consultation with the teacher.
246 The teacher shall have five instructional days after receiving the plan to
247 request a modification to the plan before it is implemented. The principal
248 must consider the requested modification before finalizing the plan. The
249 teacher shall have at least 60 instructional days to complete the mandatory
250 improvement plan.

251
252 A teacher has five workdays after finalization of the mandatory
253 improvement plan within which to submit a request to the principal for a
254 qualified observer, as defined in G.S. 115C-333.1(c)(1), to observe the
255 teacher in the area or areas of concern identified in the plan. In
256 accordance with G.S. 115C-333.1(c)(2), the board will create and maintain
257 a list of qualified observers who are employed by the board and available

258 to conduct observations. The board will strive to limit the list to
259 administrators and teachers who have excellent reputations for
260 competence and fairness. Selection of the qualified observer and
261 submission of the qualified observer's report to the principal will be in
262 accordance with G.S. 115C-333.1(c)(3).
263

264 **4. Reassessment**

265 **a. Licensed Employees in Low-Performing Schools**

266 After the expiration of the time period for the mandatory improvement
267 plan, the superintendent or designee or the assistance team shall assess the
268 employee's performance. If the assessor determines that the employee has
269 failed to become proficient in any of the performance standards articulated
270 in the mandatory improvement plan or to demonstrate sufficient
271 improvement toward such standards, the superintendent shall recommend
272 that the employee be dismissed or demoted under applicable state law.
273
274
275

276 **b. Teachers in Schools Not Identified As Low-Performing**

277 Upon completion of a mandatory improvement plan, the principal or
278 supervisor shall assess the performance of the employee. For teachers, the
279 principal shall also review and consider any report provided by the
280 qualified observer if one has been submitted before the end of the
281 mandatory improvement plan period. If, after the assessment of the
282 employee and consideration of any report from the qualified observer, the
283 superintendent or designee determines that the teacher has failed to
284 become proficient in any of the performance standards identified as
285 deficient in the mandatory improvement plan or demonstrate sufficient
286 improvement toward such standards, the superintendent may recommend
287 that the employee be dismissed or demoted under applicable state law.
288
289

290 Legal References: G.S. 115C-325 (applicable to career status teachers), -325.1 *et seq.* (applicable
291 to non-career status teachers), -333, -333.1; State Board of Education Policy TCP-C-004, TCP-
292 C-005
293

294 Cross References: Professional and Staff Development (policy 1610/7800), Evaluation of
295 Licensed Employees (policy 7810), Professional Employees: Demotion and Dismissal (policy
296 7930)
297

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