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<b>Date of Issue:</b>	December 9, 2011	<b>Effective:</b> Until revoked or modified
<b>Subject:</b>	PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAYS DEVOTED TO PROVINCIAL EDUCATION PRIORITIES	
<b>Application:</b>	Directors of Education Secretaries and Supervisory Officers of School Authorities Director, Provincial Schools Branch	
<b>References:</b>	Regulation 304, “School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days” This memorandum replaces Policy/Program Memorandum No. 151, February 8, 2010.	

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## INTRODUCTION

Regulation 304, “School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days”, made under the Education Act, sets out the conditions governing the establishment of school year calendars. The regulation provides that school boards<sup>1</sup> may designate up to six professional activity (PA) days<sup>2</sup> per school year. Two of those PA days must be devoted to provincial education priorities that are identified in the Appendix to this memorandum.

The criteria that determine the scope of the professional activities for the two mandatory PA days and the possible topics for these PA days are set out in the Appendix to this memorandum, and are effective December 9, 2011. The criteria and topics are reviewed annually to ensure that they are aligned with the provincial education priorities. If the criteria and/or topics should change as a result of the annual review, the Appendix will be updated. Note that, in this revised memorandum, one of the two mandatory PA days must now be devoted to closing the gaps in student achievement in numeracy, and the list of topics for the other PA day has been expanded and reorganized.

## LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Subsection 8(1) of the Education Act states that the Minister of Education may “establish policies and guidelines respecting criteria and topics for the professional activity days that are required by regulation and require boards to comply with the policies and guidelines” (paragraph 28).

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1. In this memorandum, *school board(s)* and *board(s)* refer to district school boards and school authorities.

2. Regulation 304, paragraphs 1 and 2 of subsection 2(3.1).

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL BOARDS**

School boards must continue to prepare their school year calendars in accordance with the requirements set out in Regulation 304. Accordingly, boards must designate two PA days and may designate up to four additional PA days per school year. Boards must ensure that the professional activities on all PA days are consistent with the definition of “professional activity” found in the regulation.<sup>3</sup> Boards must ensure that professional activities on the two mandatory PA days are devoted to the provincial education priorities set out in the Appendix to this memorandum. If boards designate one or more of the four remaining PA days available per school year, they must ensure that some of the professional activities relate to curriculum development, implementation, and review.

Boards must continue to submit their school year calendars to the Ministry of Education according to the dates specified in the regulation.

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3. As stated in section 1(1) of Regulation 304, “‘professional activity’ includes evaluation of the progress of pupils, consultation with parents, the counselling of pupils, curriculum and program evaluation and development, professional development of teachers and attendance at educational conferences, but does not include preparation by teachers for classes or instruction.”

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**APPENDIX: CRITERIA AND TOPICS FOR THE TWO MANDATORY PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAYS**

The following criteria determine the scope of the professional activities for the two PA days devoted to provincial education priorities, as set out in paragraph 1 of subsection 2(3.1) of Regulation 304:

- Professional activities are focused on teachers' professional learning with respect to improving student achievement and student success.
- Professional activities are focused on teachers' professional learning with respect to closing the gaps in student achievement.

**PA Day 1**

One PA day must be devoted to developing and implementing strategies to improve and/or to close the gaps in student achievement in numeracy.

**PA Day 2**

The second mandatory PA day will be devoted to teachers' professional learning related to any of the following topics. In all topics, a central focus will be maintained on improving student achievement and student success and/or on closing the gaps in student achievement.

***Student Achievement/Student Success***

- early learning
- performing assessments and evaluations for, as, and of learning
- using data analysis to inform instruction
- developing and implementing board and school improvement plans
- developing student and classroom learning profiles
- developing and implementing blended learning as an instructional approach
- using differentiated instructional and assessment strategies and resources that respond to students' learning needs and that reflect Ontario's diverse student population
- using e-learning to support student achievement and student success
- developing and implementing early and ongoing instructional interventions
- facilitating transitions for students who are entering school, changing grades or schools, or leaving school
- building educator literacy concerning student mental health needs, with a focus on developing educators' awareness of mental health issues
- implementing activities related to self-assessment, peer assessment, and self-regulation

***Teacher Development***

- promoting instructional leadership
- developing skills for teacher inquiry and reflective practice

***Safe and Inclusive Schools***

- improving school and student safety, including bullying prevention and intervention
- creating an equitable and inclusive classroom climate that is conducive to learning
- facilitating parental and community engagement

***Literacy***

- developing and implementing strategies to close the gaps in literacy
- developing and implementing strategies to improve boys' literacy

***French-Language Education***

- developing leadership skills for teaching in a minority setting, as outlined in the ministry document entitled *Un personnel qui se distingue! Profil d'enseignement et de leadership pour le personnel des écoles de langue française de l'Ontario, 2011*
- developing pedagogical skills to adopt a cultural approach to teaching in French-language schools, as outlined in the ministry document entitled *Une approche culturelle de l'enseignement pour l'appropriation de la culture dans les écoles de langue française de l'Ontario, 2009*
- using strategies to support French-language learners and newcomers in accordance with the ministry's curriculum policy documents entitled *Actualisation linguistique en français, 2010* and *Programme d'appui aux nouveaux arrivants, 2010*
- implementing the *programme d'accompagnement* (welcoming and support) strategy for French-language newcomers

***Aboriginal Education***

- analysing data on students who have voluntarily self-identified as Aboriginal in order to develop strategies to identify and close the gaps in Aboriginal student achievement
- developing and implementing strategies to support First Nation, Métis, and Inuit learners
- integrating study of the histories, cultures, and perspectives of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples into the curriculum

***Special Education***

- developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- facilitating parental involvement in Identification, Placement, and Review Committees and in the development of IEPs
- implementing activities related to assistive technologies, differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning, and professional learning technologies
- integrating the use of manipulative aids and technology to support a range of learning styles