



RAINS

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Employee Guide to Professional Development

2026-2027



Professional Development: A Value Add to the School Community

The most valuable resource and driving force behind student success in any school are teachers. Rains ISD knows this to be true and therefore we prioritize ongoing, comprehensive professional development. Empowering educators and enhancing their effectiveness impacts student achievement in a meaningful way and this is central to our mission at Rains ISD.

High Quality PD should be:

- Research Based
- Data Driven
- Learner Centered
- Continuously Evaluated
- Able to be Implemented

PD Focus Strands:

- Instructional Practices
- Curriculum
Internalization
- Leadership
- Compliance and Legal
- Technology
- Student Support Services

Vision & Outcomes

Pedagogy and Practices:

We seek to equip educators with the most cutting edge research based teaching methods. Through targeted training our teachers will foster engaging, student centered classrooms.

Leveraging Technology:

Utilizing technology in our classrooms to enhance instructional delivery, promote interactive learning and preparing students for the 21st century.

Data-Informed Decisions:

Leveraging data to inform instructional practices is essential to student success. Analyzing data to tailor teaching strategies and address individual student needs is a mainstay of our vision.

Professional Learning Communities:

Our vision includes vibrant PLCs within the district and throughout the ESC region 7. Opportunities for educators to engage in meaningful dialogue and share best practices are essential to our success and growth.

Leadership Development:

Empowering aspiring leaders and equipping them with the skills and confidence required to lead in our school community will lead to a healthy organization that cultivates its own leadership for the foreseeable future.

Outcome Driven:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and positive outcomes for all students aligns itself with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

Contracted Professional Development Dates

2026-2027

July 24: New Employee Training

July 21-22: Administrator Workshop

July 27-Aug 3:

District/Campus Staff Development

July 28: District Convocation

September 25: Exchange Day

October 16: Staff Development

November 13: Staff Development

November 23-25: Exchange Day

December 11: Staff Development

January 4: Work Day

February 12: Staff Development

April 16: Staff Development

May 28: Staff Development/Graduation

RISD partners with Region 7 ESC through the compliance suite to offer on-demand training opportunities for all staff:

Annual Compliance Trainings

2026-2027

- Human Trafficking Awareness
- Sexual Harassment
- Substance Abuse
- Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children
- Texas Educator's Code of Ethics
- Trauma Informed Care
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Anaphylaxis and Severe Allergic Reactions
- Conflict Resolution
- Bullying Prevention
- Cyber Security Training
- FERPA
- Laws Governing the Rights of Students with Disabilities
- Suicide Prevention
- Teen Dating Violence Prevention (*RJH and RHS staff only*)
- Understanding Copyright Law

Local Training provided to pertinent staff for the following:

- Epinephrine Auto Injectors
- Life-Vac
- AED
- Administration of Medication
- Narcan
- CPR and First Aid
- Diabetes Management
- Seizure Training
- Trauma Injury Response
- Threat Assessment

Role Specific Trainings:

- Concussion and Illegal Steroid Use
- Behavior Management, Safety, Social Skills, Problem-Solving Skills
- Discipline Management
- Title IX

Research Based
Instructional
Strategies
(RBIS) &
Curriculum
Product
Specific
Trainings

2026-2027

- Rains ISD will require Research Based Instructional Strategies (RBIS)
 - Rains ISD will require training for all teachers that will use district provided and adopted curriculum
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Exchange Days Requirements

The district provides four paid exchange days for teachers to attend professional learning during non-contract or off-duty time. Learning opportunities, such as conferences, seminars, and training, should be completed during non-duty hours.

Timeline:

The annual timeline to accrue exchange days begins on December 1 and ends on Sept. 30

Compliance Training:

Compliance training is a legal requirement of employment. Each staff member is legally required to complete the full online Compliance Bundle through Region 7 and will receive 2 exchange days upon verified completion.

Acknowledgement:

All Rains ISD employees must electronically sign the RISD Employee Acknowledgement for Exchange Day Credit in Skyward by May 2026.

NOTE: For new employees this paperwork will be signed during the HR paperwork process

Documentation and Approval:

All professional development should be aligned and have a strong connection with your professional assignment. Any training must be approved by the campus principal and documentation of this training must be provided to the campus principal or designee.

Incomplete:

If an employee has not completed the requirements for exchange days, the days will be taken from personal leave time or docked from the December check if no time is available.

NOTE: Non completion of compliance training will result in mandatory attendance on September 26. Compliance Training is a legal condition of employment and non completion can result in employment status changes.

'Double-Dipping' Not Allowed:

Exchange days must be obtained during non-contract, off duty time that a teacher is not otherwise being compensated for their day.

Exchange Day Credit

FAQ's

Can I receive credit on a teacher workday or staff development day

No, exchange day credit can only be earned on an unpaid, non-contracted day

Can I receive credit for a training that I attend outside of contracted days, but I am paid a stipend to attend?

No, this also violates the 'double dipping' rule. In this instance the employee may be given the opportunity to decline the stipend and receive an exchange day instead.

Can I receive credit for a day that I attend training at ESC 7 or another place during a regular school day?

No, this again violates the 'double dipping' rule. If an employee is being compensated or paid for the day, then this day cannot count towards an exchange day.

How many hours is equivalent to one exchange day?

Six hours is equivalent to one exchange day

Can planning be used for exchange day credit?

Yes, assuming the planning takes place on a day that is otherwise not contracted or compensated by the district. **1** exchange day may be earned for organized team planning. This must be approved by the campus principal and the principal must collect an agenda and sign-in sheet.

Can I receive exchange day credit for a book study?

Yes, one book study per year, per campus will be allowed. The book study must be led by the campus principal or designee and must consist of 3 documented hours of meeting time in addition to reading time to earn **1** exchange day. Books must be approved by the Executive Director of Academics.

Exchange Day Credit

FAQ's

Can I earn exchange day credit for college coursework?

Yes, advanced coursework in the field of education or other coursework that appropriately corresponds with your professional assignment will be accepted at a rate of 2 days for every 3 hour college course completed. An unofficial transcript showing successful completion of coursework must be submitted to the campus principal.

Do I still have to do the compliance training if I already have 4 exchange day credits?

Yes, compliance training is a legal requirement and a condition of employment.

Can I receive exchange day credit for working on National Board Certification?

Yes, candidates will receive credit hours for work sessions attended after school or on Saturdays. *NOTE: After the submission of a module for grading, the candidate will also receive 1 day of exchange credit.*

What if I am a new employee?

New Employees will receive 2 exchange days for completing compliance training and 1 exchange day for attending new employee orientation. They will work with campus leadership to determine how they obtain the final exchange day.

What if I am an hourly employee?

2 days will be completed through compliance training. 2 additional days will be approved by supervisor. Please see supervisor before assuming it will count. Double dipping rule applies. If you clock-in, then it cannot count. In Skyward you will enter for Days 1 and 2 (Sept. 26 and Nov. 24): School Activity, in exchange for compliance. For days 3 and 4 (Nov. 25 and Nov. 26): School Activity, in exchange for _____.

Can I receive exchange day credit for bus driver training?

Yes, if the training is attended on an otherwise non-contracted or compensated day.

Can I receive exchange day credit for coaching school?

Yes, 1 day of exchange day credit can be earned for coaching school. A certificate must be submitted to the campus principal showing courses taken.

Can I receive exchange day credit for other professional conferences attended during the summer?

Yes, up to 2 days may be obtained for professional conferences attended during the summer. These require approval by the principal and certificates showing courses obtained during the conference must be submitted to the campus principal.