



## **PIP Services**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*The Peer Intervention Program has raised questions, concerns, and even fears among some teachers and supervisors. Here are some common questions...and their answers.*

#### **Q: What is peer intervention?**

Answer: Peer intervention is a multi-service program for tenured teachers and guidance counselors who are struggling and who voluntarily apply for assistance. The participants commit to working individually with an intervenor for a period of up to one year. Assistance is given on a confidential basis and is tailored to the person's strengths and weaknesses in their professional capacity. The goal is to help participants become more effective or to counsel them to leave and pursue other options.

#### **Q: What is an intervenor?**

Answer: An intervenor is an experienced classroom teacher or guidance counselor with demonstrated instructional, interpersonal and peer assistance skills. He or she possesses a wide range of knowledge with respect to curriculum content, implementation of standards, classroom materials, educational methodology and the change process. Intervenors are skilled in creating a supportive, collegial climate for professional development.

#### **Q: Who should apply?**

Answer: Tenured teachers and guidance counselors who believe that their professional competence will benefit from intense, individualized assistance should apply to the Peer Intervention Program. Some people recognize on their own that they are floundering in their professional capacity. Others know they are having trouble because of supervisors' evaluations, formal warnings, or U ratings. In any case, the program is voluntary and the ultimate decision to apply is a personal one. The only requirements are that a teacher or guidance counselor is currently working with students and is committed to pursuing a high level of professional growth.

#### **Q: What can I expect to gain from work with my intervenor?**

Answer: Participants gain different things through their participation in PIP depending on their specific needs and goals. Together, the intervenor and the participant plan an individualized professional development program and decide how to carry it out. Some common areas in which participants gain expertise are lesson planning and presentation, classroom management, implementation of standards and developing healthy professional relationships.

**Q: How do I know if this program is for me?**

Answer: You may recognize on your own that you are floundering. Or you may have read the warning signs in your supervisor's evaluations. You may know that you are having trouble because you have received a "U" rating or formal warning. In any of these cases, this program might be an opportunity for you to improve your teaching/counseling skills.

**Q: What happens during the intervention process?**

Answer: This depends upon your specific professional needs. The intervenor will use whatever strategies and resources are appropriate, such as: coaching; classroom demonstrations; outside consultants; lesson planning; educational materials, literature, or research; workshops, classes, or conferences.

**Q: How long will the intervention process last?**

Answer: Again, this depends upon your needs. The only limit is that it can't exceed one year.

**Q: How often will I see my intervenor?**

Answer: Usually, you and your intervenor will meet for the equivalent of one full day per week. It might be one whole day, or two half days, depending on your program and the intervenor's schedule.

**Q: Will participating in this program require time beyond the regular school day?**

Answer: Yes. Most of the time you and the intervenor spend together will be during the school day, and you should be prepared to meet during some prep or lunch periods as well as before or after school.

**Q: If I participate, will I be viewed as a weak teacher/guidance counselor?**

Answer: No. Oftentimes, no one will know you're in intervention, and if you choose to let them know, what's more likely is that they will applaud your strength in seeking help.

**Q: What happens at the end of the intervention process?**

Answer: This is up to you and the intervenor. We hope that you will find yourself a more effective teacher/counselor. But it is also possible that the intervenor will urge you to get more assistance or to consider career alternatives. If you're interested, our alternative careers liaison will help you prepare to look for a job outside teaching.

**Q: If I participate, will people in my school know?**

Answer: The intervenor must introduce him/herself to your principal. According to the contract, however, what you and the intervenor do together or say to one another is completely confidential. Together, you will decide how the intervenor will be introduced to others.

**Q: What if my principal or supervisor wants to observe and evaluate me during my participation in this program?**

Answer: The contract specifically prohibits any observation and evaluation for the first three months of intervention.

**Q: What if I want to apply and my principal doesn't want me to?**

Answer: The contract guarantees your right to apply, and the principal is obligated to honor this right. You do not need permission.

**Q: What if my principal or supervisor is pushing me to apply or I have received a "U" rating or formal or formal warning - must I apply to the program?**

Answer: No. The program is voluntary, and the ultimate decision to apply is yours alone.

**Q: Can I apply to this program if I have not received a "U" rating or formal warning?**

Answer: Yes. If you have good reasons to believe that you are having trouble, you are welcome to apply. The only requirements are that you are currently working with students and are committed to high standards of instruction.

**Q: If I apply, is my acceptance guaranteed?**

Answer: No. The Peer Intervention Panel carefully reviews all applications and -within the limits of program resources - selects participants who need to improve their teaching/counseling skills. Those not accepted are referred to other appropriate sources of assistance.

**Q: Can this program help me if I have been denied such things as a transfer, medical leave, or sabbatical leave?**

Answer: No. This program is designed to help you improve your teaching/counseling skills. For other kinds of assistance, your chapter leader can advise you how to proceed.

**Q: How can I get more information? How and when do I apply?**

Answer: Call the program at 212-598-9210 or e-mail [pip@uft.org](mailto:pip@uft.org) for information. You can get an application from your chapter leader or from the program, and it can be submitted at any time during the year.

**Q: What's the catch?**

Answer: There is no catch! Participating in the Peer Intervention Program will affect none of your rights or privileges as guaranteed by the contract and protected by the union. And you will get the professional help you've been looking for!

The Peer Intervention Program was established by Article 21.G in the 1987 collective bargaining agreement between the New York City Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers. The Board and Union then chose the nine-member Peer Intervention Panel to work out the details of the program and select staff; it continues to oversee program policy and direction. In line with the contract, the UFT chose six members of the panel and the Board chose three members. The program began operations in the fall of 1988.

In the spring of 2001 the Peer Intervention Program has opened its doors to Guidance Counselors as established by Article 15.G in the collective bargaining agreement of the Guidance Counselor Contract