Use the four examples below to help you bargain model professional development language into your next contract. The key issues you should plan for include:
1. The design of professional development programs
2. Pay and release time
3. Eligibility
4. Funding.

Optimal elements include:
• The local association has a strong role in the design of training programs, including course offerings, scheduling, and the choice of instructors.
• All association-represented employees are eligible to attend the training sessions.
• Training sessions are held (as much as possible) on school district premises during working hours.
• Employees are paid for attending course offerings off-site and/or outside of their regular working hours.
• Approval for attendance is granted automatically upon request.

Model Language Examples:

1. New Jersey: NJEA Sample Inclusive Local Agreement

   PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ DISTRICT IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS

   A. The Board shall pay the full cost of tuition and other reasonable expenses incurred in connection with any courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service training sessions, or other such sessions which an employee elects to take and/or is requested by the administration to take. Said employee shall also be compensated for all time spent in actual attendance at said sessions beyond his/her regular working day and year at his regular rate of pay or overtime, whichever is applicable.

   B. The Board shall provide in-service improvement programs for all job categories which shall be cooperatively planned to meet priorities jointly determined by the Association and the administration. For all job categories, in-service programs shall be conducted during a regular work day if employee attendance is required. Employees who participate in an in-service program shall be given credit for each program as provided in the appropriate schedule.

   C. The Board shall expend up to ($ ) dollars each school year to purchase books, equipment and/or other resource materials for use by the staff after consultation with the Association. The Board shall provide adequate space for housing said books and materials in convenient and readily accessible locations.

   D. The Board shall expend ($ ) dollars to establish_______ number of grants to employees interested in designing and implementing innovative ideas and techniques in accordance with procedures jointly developed with the Association for all school employees.

   E. Representatives designated by the Association will be involved in the planning of any inservice program for district employees. Such representation shall be in ratio to the numbers of each employee category in the district. At least one (1) inservice program during the regular workday shall be provided for all categories of employees each year.
2. CAESAR RODNEY SCHOOL DISTRICT- PARAPROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

A. Should it become necessary for a paraprofessional to have specific training to meet the expectations of the District, the District will be responsible for providing such training at no cost to the paraprofessional.

B. The Board acknowledges that paraprofessionals are significant in assisting the educational process within the District. Should it become necessary for a paraprofessional to have specific training to meet the expectations of the Board, the Board will be responsible for providing such training at no cost to the paraprofessional.

C. Paraprofessionals shall be permitted to access CREA travel funds under the guidelines established by the Association.

D. The Board agrees to confer with the Association in arrangement of in-service programs designed to improve the job performance of paraprofessionals. Such activities shall be coordinated through the Instructional Council.

3. COLONIAL PARAPROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION INSTRUCTIONAL PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Instructional Paraprofessional Training

The district shall offer a training program to all instructional paraprofessionals beginning in the spring of 2000. The content and scope of this program shall be determined cooperatively by the district and the CPA. Paraprofessionals who complete this program will be designated as Level I Paraprofessionals and shall be paid an additional $750 stipend beyond their regular salary as of September 1 each year. The stipend shall remain in effect during the paraprofessional’s continuous service in the Colonial School District.

The district shall further offer a second level training program to all instructional paraprofessionals beginning in the fall of 2000. The content and scope of this program shall be determined cooperatively by the district and the CPA. Paraprofessionals must complete the first program successfully before enrolling in the second level. Paraprofessionals who complete this second-level program will be designated as Level II Paraprofessionals and shall then be paid a $1750 stipend beyond their regular salary as of September 1 each year. (For the 2000-2001 school year only, the district and the Association agree that a proportional amount of this stipend shall be awarded to Level II Paraprofessionals as of January 1, 2001.) This stipend shall remain in effect during the paraprofessional’s continuous service in the Colonial School District and replaces the Level I Paraprofessional stipend stated above.

The following terms and conditions shall apply to the training:

• The programs shall be offered periodically throughout the period of this agreement, but at a minimum of once each year.

• The programs will be provided outside the regular workday, and paraprofessionals who participate will not be paid for their hours of participation. Classwork or homework assigned through the program shall also be completed outside the regular workday.
• The district shall provide the instructor/facilitator, the facility, and any instructional materials, except that any paraprofessional who does not complete the training shall return instructional materials or reimburse the district for the materials.

Beginning in September, 2000, all new hires under this contract shall be considered probationary until they have completed the Level I training and their probationary performance period as specified in 11.1 is completed.

4. PENNSYLVANIA: PSEA COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REFERENCE GUIDE

Staff Development Programs

A staff development committee to determine the professional needs of employees in the bargaining unit shall be created.

The committee shall be comprised of persons from within the bargaining unit who are representative of the different educational functions within the unit. Standards and procedures for staffing the committee shall be determined by the Association.

The committee shall formulate Staff Development Program offerings with employee options responsive to the needs of the unit. The cost of formulation shall be borne by the employer.

The calendar for implementing the Staff Development Program shall be structured jointly by the Association and the employer. Their work shall be completed not later than the 160th day of the school year preceding that for which the program is intended.

During the employees’ first meeting each school year, the committee’s program for the current year shall be presented to the staff for review and approval. The approved program shall be implemented by the employer. The cost of implementing the program shall be borne by the employer.