NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TEACHER EVALUATION

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PLAN

2017 -2018

rev Oct 8, 2017

INTRODUCTION

The Norwalk Teacher Evaluation Committee adopted the following area of SEED:

- Differentiation of levels of teacher experience in the evaluation process
- Strong connections between student learning and professional growth
- Collaboration in support of school improvement
- The ability to consider professional growth opportunities for teachers assessment opportunities for evaluators

Teacher Plan Definitions
Drop-In - Unscheduled informal visit to the classroom that typically lasts up to 10 minutes with no formal data collection. The teacher should be provided with some type of feedback, however brief. This is not a visit that can be further cited in evaluation documents.

Evaluator - Supervisor certified in administration and supervision who is employed under their 092-certification endorsement.

Formal observation - Planned observations that last approximately 45 minutes or up to the duration of the period, preceded by a pre-observation conference, followed by a post-observation conference, and with timely written and verbal feedback as detailed on page 4.

Informal observations - Unscheduled observations that typically last about 20 minutes, and must be followed by meaningful written and/or verbal feedback within 2 days. A review of practice may constitute an informal observation. This is a visit that is cited in evaluation documents. In the observation process, teachers with three or more years of experience who have a summative rating of proficient or exemplary need to have a minimum of three informal observations and a review of practice in the year of the cycle with no formal in-class observations. While a review of practice could be an informal evaluation, it cannot take the place of the three in-class observations.

Post-conference - Meeting with teacher and evaluator that typically occurs a day or two after the observation (formal or informal). Post-conferences provide a forum for discussion and reflecting on the observation against the established rubrics and for generating action steps that will lead to the teacher's improvement.

Pre-conference - Meeting with teacher and evaluator that typically occurs a day or two before a formal observation. Pre-conferences are used for establishing the context for the lesson, providing information about the students to be observed, setting expectations for the observation process, and providing the evidence for Domain 2: Planning for Active Learning.

Primary evaluators
The primary evaluator for most teachers will be the school principal or assistant principal, who will be responsible for the overall evaluation process, including assigning summative ratings. Primary evaluators will have sole responsibility for assigning final summative ratings and must achieve proficiency on the training modules provided.

Review of practice - Non-classroom observations including, but not limited to: observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers, student work or other teaching artifacts. Described on page 5. While a review of practice could be an informal evaluation, it cannot take the place of the three informal in-class observations during the informal cycle of evaluations.

Teacher - Any certified staff including, but not limited to classroom teachers, speech/language pathologists, social workers, school psychologist, counselors and resource teachers, etc.

The Norwalk Plan for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development has been implemented since 2012. All evaluators will receive training in observation and evaluation and calibration for inter-rater reliability by September 15. Evaluators will demonstrate proficiency on an ongoing basis in conducting teacher evaluations. Training for certified staff will occur by October 15.

TEACHER EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Introduction

This document outlines the foundation for the Norwalk model for the evaluation and development of teachers. It is based on SEED, which is Connecticut's System for Educators Evaluation and Development.

Purpose and Rationale

When teachers succeed, students succeed. Research has shown that no school-level factor matters more to student success than high-quality teachers. To support teachers, we need to clearly define excellent practice and results; give accurate useful information about teachers' strengths and development areas; encourage honest and open dialogue about effective professional practices; and provide opportunities for growth and recognition. The purpose of the evaluation model is to fairly, collaboratively and accurately evaluate teacher performance and to help each teacher strengthen his or her practice to improve student learning.

Core design principles

The following principals guided the design of the teacher evaluation model:

- Consider multiple standards-based measures of performance
- Emphasize teacher growth over time
- Promote both professional judgment and consistency
- Foster dialogue about student learning
- Encourage aligned professional learning, coaching and feedback to support teacher growth
- Ensure feasibility of implementation

EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

The evaluation and support system consists of multiple measures to paint an accurate and comprehensive picture of teacher performance. All teachers will be evaluated in four categories, grouped into major focus areas: Teacher Practice and Student Outcomes.

1. Teacher Practice Related Indicators: An evaluation of the core instructional practices and skills that positively affect student learning. This focus area is comprised of two categories:

(a) **Observation of teacher performance and practice (40%)** as defined in the CCT Rubric for Effective Teacher and the CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery, which articulates four domains.

(b) **Parent feedback (10%)** on teacher practice through surveys

2. Student Outcomes Related Indicators: an evaluation of teachers' contribution to student academic progress, at the school and classroom level. There is also an option in this focus area to include student feedback.

(a) **Student growth and development** as determined by the teachers Student Learning Objectives (SLO's).

(b) **Whole-school measures of student learning** as determined by aggregate rating for multiple student learning indicators (5%) established for the administrator evaluation rating.

*** Goals and Objectives Using Multiple Indicators of Growth and Development**

Following current Connecticut SEED model practice, (**45%)** of the Indicators of Academic Growth and Development used as evidence of whether goals/objectives are met shall not be determined by a single, isolated test score, but shall be determined through the comparison of data across assessments administered over time.

Each teacher must establish a minimum of one Student Learning Objectives (SLOs.)

Each SLO must have at least one Indicator of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD)
In total, each teacher must have at least two IAGDs.
22.5% of IAGDs shall be based on a standardized measure, if available and appropriate.
22.5% of IAGDs shall be based on non-standardized measures, or 45% if no standardized measures are available or appropriate.

Scores from each of the four categories are combined to produce a summative performance rating of Exemplary, Proficient, Developing or Below Standard. The performance levels are defined as:

Exemplary: substantially exceeding indicators of performance
Proficient: meeting indicators of performance
Developing: meeting some indicators of performance but not others
Below Standard: not meeting indicators of performance

Observation Process

Teachers New to the District First and Second Years of all teachers new to the district	At least three formal in-class observations: two of which include a pre-conference and all of which include a post-conference
Below Standard and *Developing*	At least three formal in-class observations: two of which include a pre-conference and all of which must include a post-conference. One of the formal observations may be a non-classroom observation tied to a teacher's professional needs and student progress, i.e. Observations of a data team meeting, coaching/mentoring another teacher, or a common planning meeting. Norwalk Focused Assistance and Intervention Plan if needed.
Proficient and *Exemplary*	Teachers who receive and maintain a performance evaluation designation of *proficient* or *exemplary* shall be evaluated with a minimum of one formal in-class observation no less frequent than every three years and three informal in-class observations in all other years. One review of practice shall be completed every year. *see definitions.*

Observations beyond the minimum protocol are encouraged and shall be preceded by dialogue with the teacher about the rationale for them.

The district will use the CCT Rubric for Effective teaching and the CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery (see Attachment A):

Domain one: Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning

Domain two: Planning for Active Learning

Domain three: Instruction for Active Learning

Domain four: Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership

Formal observations: Planned observations shall last approximately 45 minutes, which should be sufficient time to collect meaningful data about individual professional practice. Formal observations shall ideally occur within two (2) school days of a pre-observation conference. A post-observation conference shall occur approximately two (2) school days after the lesson. The written observation shall be completed within approximately ten (10) school days of the post-observation conference.

- **Pre-conferences** are valuable for giving context for the lesson and information about the students to be observed and for setting expectations for the observation process. A pre-conference can be held with a group of teachers, where appropriate.
- **Post-conferences** provide a forum for reflecting on the observation against the CCT Rubric for Effective teaching and the CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery for generating action steps that will lead to a teacher's improvement. A good post- conference:
  - Begins with an opportunity for the teacher to share his/her self-assessment of the lesson observed;
  - Cite objective evidence to paint a clear picture for both the teacher and the evaluator about the teacher successes, what improvements will be made, and where future observations may focus.

Informal observations are unscheduled observations that typically last about 20 minutes, and must be followed by meaningful written and/or verbal feedback within 2 days. This is a visit that is cited in evaluation documents. A review of practice may constitute an informal observation, but may not take the place of the three required informal evaluations in that cycle of evaluation.

- **Non-classroom observations/reviews of practice.** Because the evaluation model aims to provide teachers with comprehensive feedback on their practice as defined by the four domains of the CCT Rubrics, all interactions with teachers that are relevant to their instructional practice and professional conduct may contribute to their performance evaluations. Non-classroom observations/reviews of practice may include but are not limited to: observations of data team meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other teachers, student work or other teaching artifacts.

Proficient and exemplary teachers who have submitted their resignation for purposes of retirement shall be observed through the informal observation process. All provisions of the evaluation process are still applicable.

Parent Feedback

Feedback from parents will be used to help determine the remaining 10% of the teacher practice indicators focus area. Provision is included for School Governance Council to assist in the development of whole school surveys to align with school improvement goals.

The process for determining the parent feedback rating includes the following steps:

1. The school conducts a whole-school parent survey, which is aggregated at the school level.
2. Administrators and teachers determine several school-level parents goals based on the survey feedback.
3. The teacher and evaluator identify one related parent-engagement goal and set improvement targets.
4. Evaluator and teacher measure progress on growth targets; and
5. Evaluator determines a teacher's summative rating, based on four performance levels.

Administration of a Whole School Parent Survey

Parent survey should be conducted at the whole-school level as opposed to the teacher level, meaning parent feedback will be aggregated at the school level. This is to ensure adequate response rates from parents.

Parent surveys must be administered in way that allows parents to feel comfortable providing feedback without fear of retribution. Surveys should be confidential and survey responses should not be tied to parents' names. The parent survey should be distributed to every spring and trends analyzed from year-to-year.

Determining School-Level Parent Goals

Evaluators and teachers should review the parent survey results at the beginning of the school year to identify areas of need and set general parent engagement goals. Ideally, this goal setting process would occur between the principal and teachers (possibly during faculty meetings) in late August or September so agreement can be reached on 2- 3 improvement goals for the entire school/program.

Selecting a Parent Engagement Goal and Improvement Targets

After the school-level goals have been set, teachers will determine through consultation and mutual agreement with their evaluators **one** related parent goal they would like to pursue as part of their evaluation. Possible goals include improving communication with parents, helping parents become more effective in support of homework, improving parent-teacher conferences, etc.

Measuring Progress on Growth Targets

Teachers and their evaluators should use their judgment in setting growth/ improvement targets for the parent feedback component. There are two ways teachers can measure and demonstrate progress on their growth targets. Teachers can (1) measure how successfully they implement a strategy to address an area of need, (like the examples in the previous section), and/or (2) they can collect evidence directly from parents to measure parent-level indicators they generate. For example, teachers can conduct interviews with parents for a brief parent survey to see if they improved on their growth target.

Arriving at a Parent Feedback Rating

The Parent Feedback Rating should reflect the degree to which a teacher successfully reaches his/her parent goal and improvement targets. This is accomplished through a review of evidence provided by the teacher and application of the following scale:

[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Exceeded the goal	Met the goal	Partially met the goal	Did not meet the goal

Teacher Evaluation Process and Timeline
The annual evaluation process between a teacher and an evaluator (principal or designee) is anchored by three performance conversations at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. The purpose of these conversations is to clarify expectations for the evaluation process, provide comprehensive feedback to each teacher on his/her performance, set development goals and identify development opportunities. These conversations are collaborative and require reflection and preparation by both the evaluator and the teacher in order to be productive and meaningful.

<u>**Goal-Setting and Planning**</u>:

Timeframe: Target is October 15: must be completed by November 15

1. *Orientation of Process*- To begin the evaluation process, evaluators meet with teachers, in a group or individually to discuss the evaluation process and their roles and responsibilities within it. In this meeting, they will discuss any school or district priorities that should be reflected in teacher practice goals and student learning objectives (SLOs), and they will commit to set time aside for the types of collaboration required by the evaluation process

2. *Teacher Reflection and Goal-Setting* – The teacher examines student data, prior year evaluation and survey results and the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching Domains to draft a proposed performance and practice goal(s), a parent feedback goal, student learning objectives (SLOs). The teacher may collaborate in grade-level or subject matter teams to support the goal-setting process.

3. *Goal-Setting Conference* – The evaluator and teacher meet to discuss the teacher's proposed goals and objectives in order to arrive at mutual agreement about them. The teacher collects evidence about his/her practice and the evaluator collects evidence about the teacher's practice to support the review. The evaluator may request revisions to the proposed goals and objectives if they do not meet approval criteria.

<u>Mid-Year Check-In:</u>
Timeframe: January and February
1. *Reflection and Preparation* – The teacher and evaluator collect and reflect on evidence to date about the teacher's practice and student learning in preparation for the check-in.

2. *Mid-Year Conference* -- The evaluator and teacher complete at least one mid-year check-in conference during which they review progress on teacher practice goals, student learning objectives (SLOs) and performance on each to date. The mid-year conference is an important point in the year for addressing review progress/concerns and reviewing results for the first half of the year. Evaluators can deliver mid-year formative information on components of the evaluation framework for which evidence has been gathered and analyzed. If needed, teachers and evaluators can mutually agree to revisions on the strategies or approaches used and/or mid-year adjustment of SLOs to accommodate changes (e.g. students populations, assignment). They also discuss actions that the teacher can take and supports the evaluator can provide to promote teacher growth in his/her development areas.

<u>End-of-Year Summative Review:</u>
<u>Timeframe: **Mid-May to June are periods of reflection and self-assessment.**</u> Whenever possible, all observations that will be used to determine a final rating should be completed before the self-assessment phase of the yearly cycle. All documents must be completed by June 30.

1. *Teacher self-assessment* – The teacher reviews all information and data collected during the year and completes a self-assessment for review by the evaluator. This self-assessment may focus specifically on the areas for development established in the goal-setting conference.

2. Scoring – The evaluator reviews submitted evidence, self-assessments and observation data to generate category and focus area ratings. The category ratings generate the final, summative rating.

3. End-of-Year Conference -- The evaluator and the teacher meet to discuss all evidence collected to date and to discuss category ratings. Following the conference, the evaluator assigns a summative rating and generates a summary report of the evaluation before the end of the school year or before June 30, except for those evaluations in which standardized assessments comprise the SLO goals. In these cases, finalization of the evaluation must occur after the standardized data has been reported to and analyzed by the district and evaluator.

Primary evaluators
The primary evaluator for most teachers will be the school principal or assistant principal/housemaster, who will be responsible for the overall evaluation process, including assigning summative ratings. Primary evaluators will have sole responsibility for assigning final summative ratings and must achieve proficiency on the training modules provided.

Ensuring fairness and accuracy: Evaluator Training, Monitoring and Auditing

The Norwalk Plan for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development has been implemented since 2012. All evaluators will receive training and calibration for inter-rater reliability by September 15. Training for certified staff will occur by October 15.

SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

As a standalone, evaluation cannot hope to improve teaching practice and student learning. However, when paired with effective, relevant and timely support, the evaluation process has the potential to help move teachers along to exemplary practice.

Evaluation-Based Professional Learning

In any sector, people learn and grow by honestly co-assessing current performance, setting clear goals for future performance, and outlining the supports they need to close the gap. Throughout the Norwalk model, every teacher will be identifying their professional learning needs in mutual agreement between the teacher and his/her evaluator. This will serve as the foundation for ongoing conversations about the teacher's practice and impact on student outcomes. The professional learning opportunities identified for each teacher should be based on the individual strengths and needs that are identified through the evaluation process. The process may also reveal areas of common need among teachers, which can then be targeted with school-wide professional development opportunities.

Improvement and Remediation Plans

A. Focused Assistance Plan and Process

Definition: If a teacher's summative rating is *developing or below standard,* or there is a substantive change in performance, it signals the need for the administrator to create an individual teacher improvement and remediation plan. No teacher shall be put on a plan without being presented with all of the evidence used to justify the necessity of the plan. An administrator may create a focused assistance or remediation plan in consultation with the teacher and his/her Norwalk Federation of Teacher Representative during the school year when there is evidence that there are significant performance issues that have not been improved after repeated attempts at improvement through the observation and post-observation process. Norwalk will use a Focused Assistance Model and/or Intensive Assistance model. If there are not documented performance and practice concerns, a focused assistance plan is not recommended. The goal of Focused Assistance is to improve the current practice of a teacher.

- The primary evaluator shall meet with the teacher and his/her exclusive bargaining representative to discuss the assessment and identify the specific assistance that shall be provided in order for the teacher to improve performance to the proficiency level over a period of time.

- The District's Human Resource Officer and the NFT President shall be notified in writing by the primary evaluator when the teacher is placed on Focused Assistance.

- There are three required parts to any Focused Assistance plan that must be developed in consultation with the teacher during this meeting:

    1. **Identify resources**, coaching, professional development, and other supports and strategies to be provided by the district to address documented deficiencies.

    2. **Indicate a specific time frame** for implementing such resources, support and other strategies, and a cycle of classroom observations and meetings with primary evaluator in

the course of the same school year as the plan is issued. No more than one formal observation per week should be scheduled.

3. **Identify indicators of success**, including a summative rating of *proficient* or better at the conclusion of the improvement and remediation plan.

4. **Optionally,** should a "Collegial Collaborator" wish, he/she may volunteer to provide assistance to the teacher in need of a professional assistance plan and to serve as a resource to the administration in the development of the plan. This relationship shall be short term, confidential, non-evaluative and mutually acceptable to the collegial collaborator and the teacher who may need assistance with a particular issue. To the extent possible, the District shall facilitate this process by structuring time when the two teachers may meet.

- During Focused Assistance, the teacher shall continue in his/her current evaluation phase. At the end of the Focused Assistance period, the teacher shall be removed from this status or be placed on Intervention. A record shall be maintained that the teacher has been placed on Focused Assistance and the outcome of that process.

B. Intensive Assistance Plan and Process

Definition: When a tenured teacher's performance has been evaluated as "Developing" in two or more domains of the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching or the CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery, or components of the Evaluation system (SLOs, Observation of Practice, Feedback, etc.) in the annual assessment, an intensive process of intervention shall be set in place for the purpose of bringing maximum support and supervision to the teacher, following the same process for Focused Assistance. This teacher may be a candidate for termination.

A teacher whose performance during the school year has been documented to be "Developing" in two or more domains may also be placed in this category. Under normal circumstances, this will only be after a "Focused Assistance" cycle has been completed.

Career Development and Growth

Rewarding exemplary performance identified through the evaluation process with opportunities for career development and professional growth is a critical step in both building confidence in the evaluation system itself and in building the capacity of all teachers.

Examples of such opportunities include, but are not limited to: peer modeling; mentoring early-career teachers; participating in development of teacher improvement and remediation plans for peer whose performance is developing or below standard; leading Professional Learning Communities ' differentiated career pathways' and focused professional development based on goals for continuous growth and development.

<u>Feedback</u>

The goal of feedback is to help teachers grow as educators and become more effective with each and every one of their students. With this in mind, evaluators should be clear and direct, presenting their comments in a way that is supportive and constructive. Feedback should include:

- Specific evidence and ratings, where appropriate, on observed components of the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching or the CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery

- Prioritized commendations and recommendations for development actions
- Next steps the teacher can pursue to improve his/her practice.
- A time frame for follow-up

Teacher performance and practice focus area
As described in the evaluation process and timeline section, teachers develop one performance and practice focus area that is aligned to the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching or the CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery. The focus area will guide observations and feedback conversations throughout the year.

Each teacher will work with his or her evaluator to develop a practice and performance focus area through mutual agreement. All focus areas should have a clear link to student achievement and should move the teacher toward *proficient* or *exemplary.* Schools may decide to create school-wide or grade-specific focus areas aligned to a particular indicator.

Growth related to the focus areas should be referenced in the feedback conversations throughout the year. The focus area and action steps should be formally discussed during the Mid-Year conference and the End-of-Year conference. Although performance and practice focus areas are not explicitly rated as part of the Teacher Performance and Practice component, growth related to the focus area will be reflected in the scoring of Teacher Performance and Practice evidence.

Teacher Performance and Practice Scoring
<u>Individual observations</u>
Evaluators are not required to provide an overall rating for each observation, but they should provide ratings and evidence for the rubric indicators that were observed. During observations, evaluator should take evidence-based, scripted notes, capturing specific instances of what the teacher and students said and did in the classroom. Evidence-based notes are factual (e.g., the teacher asks: which events precipitated the fall of Rome?) and not judgmental (e.g., the teacher asks good questions). Once the evidence has been recorded, the evaluator can align the evidence with the appropriate indicator on the rubric and then make a determination about which performance level the evidence supports.

To assure that any type of formal observation is given the attention and respect it deserves, and in support of the framework of three-phase cycle illustrated on page 7, no formal or informal observation will take place on the last day of school, before a holiday break, during standardized testing periods, or within the last two weeks of the school year, except by mutual agreement. Formal observations are to be spread out over time, with the expectation of at least a month apart.

Summative Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice rating
Primary evaluators must determine a final teacher performance and practice rating and discuss this rating with teachers during the End-of-the-Year Conference. Within the Norwalk plan, each domain of the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching or the CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery carries equal weight in the final rating. The final teacher performance and practice reading will be calculated by the evaluator in a three-step process:

1. Evaluator holistically reviews evidence collected through observations and interactions (e.g., team meetings, conferences) and uses professional judgment to determine indicator ratings for each of the 12 indicators.

2. Evaluator averages indicators within each domain to a tenth of a decimal to calculate domain level scores of 1.0-4.0.
3. Evaluator averages domain scores to calculate an overall observation of Teacher Performance and Practice rating of 1.0-4.0

<u>Each step is illustrated below:</u>
1. Evaluator holistically reviews evidence collected through observations and interactions and uses professional judgment to determine indicator ratings for each of the 12 indicators.

2. By the end of the year, evaluator should have collected a variety of evidence on teacher practice from the year's observations and interactions. Evaluators then analyze the consistency, trends, and significance of the evidence to determine a rating for each of the 12 indicators. Some questions to consider while analyzing the evidence include:

> **Consistency:** What rating have I seen relatively uniform, homogenous evidence for throughout the semester? Does the evidence paint a clear, unambiguous picture of the teacher's performance in this area?
>
> **Trends:** have I seen improvement overtime that overshadows earlier observation outcomes? Have I seen regression or setbacks over time that overshadows earlier observation outcomes?
>
> **Significance:** Is some data more valid than others? (Do I have notes for ratings from "meatier" lessons or interactions where I was able to better assess this aspect of performance?)

3. The summative Teacher Performance and Practice category rating and the indicator ratings will be shared and discussed with teachers during the End-of-the-Year Conference. This process can also be followed in advance of the mid-year conference to discuss progress toward Teacher Performance and Practice goals/outcomes.

Teacher Summative Rating
45% student growth and development
5% whole school student learning indicators
40% observations of practice and performance
10% parent feedback

Definition of Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness
New teachers shall generally be deemed *effective* if said educator receives at least two sequential *proficient* ratings, one of which must be earned in the fourth year of a novice teacher's career. A *below standard* rating shall only be permitted in the first year of a novice teachers career, assuming a pattern of growth of developing in year two and two sequential *proficient* ratings in years three and four. This shall be accomplished through the specific issuance to that effect.

A post tenure educator shall generally be deemed *ineffective* if said educator receives at least two sequential *developing* ratings or one *below standard* rating at any time.

Conflict Resolution
A panel, composed of Director of Human Services, Teacher's Union President and a neutral third person, shall resolve disputes where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on objectives/goals, the evaluation

period, feedback on performance and practice, for final summative rating. Resolutions must be topic-specific and timely. Should the process established not result in resolution of a given issue, the determination regarding that issue will be made by the Superintendent.