TEACHER EVALUATION

AND

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2011/2012
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Executive Summary

Successful student achievement demands that the practice of teachers in the classroom is grounded in those principles that recognize:

- teachers must know the content of what they teach;
- teachers organize the learning environment in a manner which demands respect for self and others;
- students are actively engaged in the process of constructing learning for themselves;
- teachers understand and use good pedagogical knowledge;
- teachers continually work on their own professional development, and
- actively participate in developing a culture of trust, respect, and collaborative dialogue.

The District’s administrators have the responsibility of ensuring that they:

- provide strong and active instructional leadership;
- foster and support a learning community that recognizes and encourages outstanding professional performance;
- engage and encourage teachers to examine the work which they do;
- provide the resources to enable all teachers to become masters of their craft, and
- build and nurture a culture of trust, respect, and collaborative dialogue.

The Commissioner of Education’s regulation requires that each school district shall have in place a teacher evaluation and professional development plan. This plan must specify the criteria that will be used to evaluate its teachers. The plan is also integrally connected to professional development.

The Commissioner’s requirement enables us to articulate our commitment to ensuring that all students shall meet high performance expectations. Further, the plan specifies the process by which all teachers will be assessed in meeting this responsibility and outlines how we will provide for the growth of our professional teachers. The District’s plan will be reevaluated each year as we learn more about what has been effective and what can be improved.

The supervisory/evaluative process has been the subject of much research and inquiry. How can we best assess good teaching? How can we provide for the increased professional growth of those teachers who, by the achievement of their students, have demonstrated that they should take greater responsibility for their own professional development? What process can be instituted to encourage the risk taking and experimentation that is necessary for teachers to develop and refine their skills and craft without fear of negative assessment?

This document outlines the Norwalk Public Schools’ plan to assess in a comprehensive and supportive way the work of teachers. Assessment or evaluation considers the overall work of the teacher. This includes not only student achievement and the instruction that happens in the classroom, but also how a teacher meets overall professional responsibilities, e.g.,
communication with parents, and the teacher’s contribution to the life of the school and the district.

The plan is also designed to assist in the supervisory process, i.e., the improvement of instruction, by providing assessment tools that are meaningful and valuable for teachers in both self-reflection, and in the work they do with administrators in planning for and providing classroom instruction. Our intent, within the spirit of the collective bargaining agreement, is to use the supervisory and assessment process to facilitate the professional growth of teachers and to provide an important tool in determining the continued employment of both tenured and non-tenured teachers.

Finally, the plan provides the process by which teachers will participate in professional growth activities.

The document is divided into the following sections: Criteria for Assessment of Performance, Teacher Observation, Teacher Evaluation, and Professional Development Plans. Attached to the document are appendices that provide forms that will be used for the annual evaluation, self-reflection on annual performance, lesson planning, classroom observation, self-reflection on a lesson, a school professional development plan, planning professional development activities, and an annual professional development plan evaluation.

A committee of administrators and teachers developed the plan guided by documents of the Connecticut State Education Department, the Instructional Goal of the Board of Education, the District’s Instructional Plan, and a Research Based Planning model. In developing the teacher observation and evaluation portions of the document, we have relied most heavily on the work of Charlotte Danielson (See Enhancing Professional Practice, A Framework for Teaching, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1996 and Teacher Evaluation: To Enhance Professional Practice, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2000).

The plan is reviewed annually and changes are made to reflect emerging needs and best practice. The plan is submitted annually to the Board of Education for its approval.
TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Salvatore J. Corda, Ph.D  Superintendent of Schools
Patricia Lawler  Housemaster, Norwalk High School
Marilyn Liberatore  Principal, Columbus Magnet School
Kathy May  Assistant Principal, Jefferson Elementary School,
Bruce LeVine Mellion  Norwalk Federation of Teachers, President
Fay Ruotolo  Human Resources Officer
Carol V. Seirup  Teacher, West Rocks Middle School, NFT First Vice-President
Ellen Gaber  Teacher, Brien McMahon High School NFT Second Vice-President
Joseph Vellucci  Principal, Roton Middle School

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Shirley Mosby  Rosa Murray  Rob Polley
Midaglia Rivas  Greg Burnett  Thomas Vetter
Criteria for Assessment of Performance

Connecticut’s Common Core of Teaching (CCT), presents a comprehensive view of an accomplished teacher. It embodies the knowledge, skills and competencies that teachers need to ensure that students learn and perform at high levels. These standards reflect current research and thinking about the mission of schooling and the job of teaching. (Connecticut’s Commitment to Excellence in Teaching: The Second Generation, Connecticut State Board of Education, 1999, 20.) This perspective states that teachers have knowledge of students, content, and pedagogy; that they apply this knowledge by planning, instructing, and assessing and adjusting, and that teachers demonstrate professional responsibility through professional and ethical practice, reflective and continuous learning, and leadership and collaboration.

Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching - 1999

Foundational Skills and Competencies

I. Teachers have knowledge of:
   Students
   1. Teachers understand how students learn and develop.
   2. Teachers understand how students differ in their approaches to learning.
   Content
   1. Teachers are proficient in reading, writing and mathematics.
   2. Teachers understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) they teach.
   Pedagogy
   1. Teachers know how to design and deliver instruction.
   2. Teachers recognize the need to vary their instructional methods.

II. Teachers apply this knowledge by:
   Planning
   1. Teachers plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum and the community.
   2. Teachers select and/or create learning tasks that make subject matter meaningful to students.
   Instructing
   1. Teachers establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a commitment to students and their successes.
   2. Teachers create instructional opportunities that support students' academic, social and personal development.
   3. Teachers use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques that foster individual and collaborative inquiry.
   4. Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills.
Assessing and Adjusting
   1. Teachers use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate.

III. Teachers demonstrate professional responsibility through:
   Professional and Ethical Practice
   1. Teachers conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Section 10-145d-400a of the Connecticut Certification Regulations).
   2. Teachers share responsibility for student achievement and well-being.

Reflection and Continuous Learning
   1. Teachers continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community.
   2. Teachers seek out opportunities to grow professionally.

Leadership and Collaboration
   1. Teachers serve as leaders in the school community.
   2. Teachers demonstrate a commitment to their students and a passion for improving their profession.

The Danielson Model
Charlotte Danielson\(^1\) in *Enhancing Professional Practice, A Framework for Teaching*, developed the model chosen for our purpose. Danielson based her work on the Praxis III: Classroom Performance Assessments criteria developed by the Educational Testing Service. These criteria are aligned with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) principles and the standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), and other standards for teachers.

Danielson identifies four domains: (I) Planning and Preparation, (II) The Classroom Environment, (III) Instruction, and (IV) Professional Responsibilities as key factors of professional practice. Each domain contains specific components that define a specific aspect of the domain. Components are distinct, yet, related to each other. Components are further refined into elements that provide a more specific focus on the component. The strength of this model lies in the potential to assess teacher performance on each of the components. Overall, the four domains provide the basis for a rubric based evaluative document. Separate rubrics have been developed for specialized positions.

A rubric is a set of criteria that is used to assess the qualitative performance level of a task. The rubric should organize and clarify the criteria well enough so that two individuals who apply the rubric to the performance task will generally come to the same assessment.

Using the constructs from the Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, and Instruction domains, we developed a unified approach to classroom observation that includes planning, lesson observation, and post-observation documents that are all based on the same rubrics.

**DOMAIN 1 - PLANNING AND PREPARATION**
This domain includes the comprehensive understanding of the content to be taught, knowledge of the students’ backgrounds, and designing instruction and assessment. Components include:
1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy
1b: Demonstrating knowledge of students
1c: Selecting instructional goals
1d: Demonstrating knowledge of resources
1e: Designing coherent instruction
1f: Assessing student learning

**DOMAIN 2 - THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT**
This domain addresses the teacher’s skill in establishing an environment conducive to learning, including both the physical and interpersonal aspects of the environment. Components include:
2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport
2b: Establishing a culture for learning
2c: Managing classroom procedures
2d: Managing student behavior
2e: Organizing physical space

**DOMAIN 3 – INSTRUCTION**
This domain focuses on the teacher’s skill in engaging students in learning the content and includes the wide range of instructional strategies that enable students to learn. Components include:
3a: Communicating clearly and accurately
3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques
3c: Engaging students in learning
3d: Providing feedback to students
3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness

**DOMAIN 4 – PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**
This domain addresses a teacher’s additional professional responsibilities, including self-assessment and reflection, communication with parents, participating in ongoing professional development, and contributing to the school and district environment as a community of learners. Components are:
4a: Reflecting on teaching
4b: Maintaining accurate records
4c: Communicating with families
4d: Contributing to the school and district as a learning community
4e: Growing and developing professionally
4f: Showing professionalism

Each domain contains a series of components and elements that provide a more refined definition and the basis for focused observation and assessment.
As an example, under the domain of Professional Responsibilities, the component, “Reflection on Teaching”, describes the practice of thinking about lessons or other instructional activities after they occur. Within this component, there are two elements. “Accuracy” describes how the teacher is more or less discerning in evaluating success and errors. “Use in future teaching”, describes how a teacher uses this information to refine practice and approach the next time the teacher encounters the topic. (See Danielson, 106.) The following illustrates the connection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>IV. Professional Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component</td>
<td>IV a: Reflection on Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Element(s)</td>
<td>Accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use in future teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a strong correspondence between the Foundational Skills and Competencies of Connecticut’s Common Core of Teaching and the components of Danielson’s domains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecticut Common Core of Teaching</th>
<th>Danielson Model - Domain and Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers have knowledge of:</td>
<td>1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• students,</td>
<td>1b: Demonstrating knowledge of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• content,</td>
<td>1d: Demonstrating knowledge of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• pedagogy;</td>
<td>2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They apply this knowledge by:</td>
<td>2b: Establishing a culture for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• planning,</td>
<td>2c: Managing classroom procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• instructing,</td>
<td>2d: Managing student behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• assessing and adjusting;</td>
<td>2e: Organizing physical space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers demonstrate professional responsibility through:</td>
<td>1c: Selecting instructional goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• professional and ethical practice,</td>
<td>1e: Designing coherent instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reflective and continuous learning,</td>
<td>1f: Assessing student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• leadership and collaboration.</td>
<td>3a: Communicating clearly and accurately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut’s Commitment to Excellence in Teaching</td>
<td>3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3c: Engaging students in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3d: Providing feedback to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August, 2007 - Revision Adopted by the Board of Education</td>
<td>4a: Reflecting on teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4b: Maintaining accurate records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4c: Communicating with families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4d: Contributing to the school and district as a learning community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4e: Growing and developing professionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4f: Showing professionalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

Each element of a component has four levels of performance: unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, and distinguished. The levels range from describing teachers who are still striving to master the rudiments of teaching (unsatisfactory) to highly accomplished professionals who are able to share their expertise (distinguished).

**Unsatisfactory**
The teacher does not yet appear to understand the concepts underlying the component. Working on the fundamental practices associated with the elements will enable the teacher to grow and develop in this area. There is a serious question as to whether or not learning is actually occurring.

**Basic**
The teacher appears to understand the concepts underlying the component and attempts to implement its elements. But implementation is sporadic, intermittent, or otherwise not entirely successful. Additional reading, discussion, visiting classrooms of other teachers, and experience (particularly supported by a mentor) will enable the teacher to become proficient in this area.

For supervision or evaluation, this level is minimally competent - improvement is likely with experience, and little or no actual harm is done to students.

**Proficient**
The teacher clearly understands the concepts underlying the component and implements them well. Most experienced, capable teachers will regard themselves and be regarded by others as performing at this level. A proficient teacher is a very good teacher.

**Distinguished**
Teachers at this level are master teachers and make a contribution to the field, both in and outside their school. Their classrooms operate at a qualitatively different level, consisting of a community of learners, with students highly motivated and engaged and assuming considerable responsibility for their own learning.

Connection between Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development

Teachers improve their practice through professional development. **Student learning is the focus of teacher evaluation and professional development.** Just as professional development should be tied to that outcome, so should the effect of the evaluation/supervision process be observable in student learning. The following model illustrates this connection.

As Morrisey states:

A school that operates as a “professional learning community” engages the entire group of professionals in coming together for learning within a supportive, self-created community. Teacher and administrator learning is more complex, deeper, and more fruitful in a professional setting where participants can interact, test their ideas, challenge their inferences and interpretations, and process new information with each other. When new ideas are processed in interaction with others, multiple sources of knowledge and expertise expand and test the new concepts as part of the learning experience. The professional learning community provides a setting that is richer and more stimulating.3

A culture must be fostered that reflects trust, respect, and a commitment to professional growth. Learning communities transcend academic matters and extend to the overall climate of the school and the district. Effective learning communities exist when individuals feel that they are free to express themselves professionally in a positive environment where open dialogue is expected and encouraged and where each person is treated with respect and dignity.

In a community of learners, the Board of Education, Administration, and teachers play important and pivotal roles.

The Board of Education, through its goals and policies, articulates the District’s commitment to high student achievement and the professional growth of staff. It supports a planned professional

development program by providing funds and making time available for the planning of activities and implementation of the program under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent of Schools has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the District’s Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development plan. Central office staff serves as a resource to principals and provides District leadership. The annual revision of the Evaluation and Professional Development plan is the result of the recommendations of teachers and administrators to the committee responsible for the development of the plan. Recommendations for revision are made to the Board of Education on an annual basis.

Principals and other administrators are the evaluators of teachers. They are also the individuals primarily responsible for creating the capacity for the professional growth of teachers by providing leadership and structure. This capacity is enhanced by the active participation of teachers in the identification and designing of professional development activities for improving instructional practice and enhancing content knowledge. Additionally, the focus of professional development is determined annually with the development of each school’s Growth Plan. The professional development activities articulated in the School Growth Plan should emanate from the need for teachers to improve their practice or content knowledge in order to directly impact and enhance student learning.

Teachers have the responsibility for reflecting on their own practice and participating in those activities that will enhance their professional growth. DuFour et al. report that, “The American Federation of Teachers has endorsed the premise that teachers should be engaged in a ‘continuous process of individual and collective examination and improvement of practice.’”

The success of each component of the learning community is dependent on a common understanding and language about good instructional practice. Effective observation and evaluation results in meaningful professional development leading to improved performance and higher student achievement. This cycle perpetuates a culture of continuous improvement.

Rose is Rose By Pat Brady and Don Wimmer

Teacher Observation

I. The Process

Teachers shall be observed openly and with their full knowledge. A formal observation, to a certain extent, creates a situation where it ought to be difficult to perform poorly. The teacher knows that the evaluator is coming, has had the opportunity to meet with the evaluator beforehand to discuss the lesson, and thus has been able to plan as comprehensively as possible to ensure a good lesson. Nevertheless, there is much to be gained by this process. The thoughtfulness involved in planning well and in reflecting on the effectiveness of the lesson is a valuable tool for professional growth. As has been demonstrated in the significant body of literature on the cognitive coaching process \(^5\), the dialogue between the teacher and evaluator before and after the lesson has the potential to enhance professional growth, refine practice, and improve student learning. A skilled evaluator can be a powerful resource in coaching teachers by acknowledging teacher excellence and providing specific suggestions to enhance performance.

Formal observations shall be a minimum of twenty-five minutes in length and ideally shall occur within two (2) days of the pre-observation conference. If the discussion in the pre-observation conference suggests that a substantive modification to the lesson is needed, adequate time (approximately one to two days) should be allowed for the teacher to re-think the lesson. A second pre-conference should be held to discuss the revised lesson plan.

To take full advantage of the formal observation process, every announced observation shall be preceded by a conference with the evaluator where the focus of discussion will be the upcoming lesson. The observation of the lesson shall be followed by a conference where the teacher shall discuss the effectiveness of the lesson with the evaluator. The post-observation conference shall be no more than five (5) school days after the lesson with a good faith effort made to schedule the conference within three (3) days. The value of this process is enhanced when sufficient time is provided to allow for reflection and dialogue between the evaluator and the teacher. The written observation should be completed within twenty (20) days of the post-observation conference. Barring unforeseen and critical emergencies, an observation should be conducted when scheduled.

The pre-observation conference shall be guided by the questions in the Pre-Observation Conference Worksheet (Appendix A). The teacher shall complete this document prior to the lesson. This, and whatever other class related documents that may be helpful in understanding the intent of the lesson, shall be brought to the conference. The Pre-Observation Conference Worksheet represents the thinking of the teacher about the intended lesson. It is not a part of the observation document and is not to be included in a teacher’s file, unless the teacher wishes to use it in lieu of the lesson plan. The worksheet is to be used as a stimulus for, and focus of, the dialogue between the teacher and the evaluator. As a result of this exchange, the initial plan may be changed. Further, the discussion related to the intended lesson does not, and should not, prevent the teacher from taking advantage of a “teachable moment” should an unforeseen

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situation arise. The record of this planning shall be the Pre-Observation Conference Worksheet or the teacher’s written lesson plan or the written notes of the evaluator.

During the observation, the intensity of focus shall be on no more than two or three components in each of Domain 2 (The Classroom Environment) and Domain 3 (Instruction). These shall be decided upon during the pre-observation conference and shall be noted on the observation form. In some cases, the teacher and the evaluator shall mutually decide on the components. The evaluator, based on specific concerns, may determine which components of the domains shall be the focus of the lesson. The written observation shall indicate when the specific components of focus have been determined collaboratively or at the direction of the evaluator. The observer shall be attuned to the other components and appropriately make reference to them in the observation.

Every teacher will be provided with a copy of *Components of Professional Practice*, (Educational Testing Service, 2001). This booklet will be an important resource during the pre- and post-observation discussions. Every teacher is expected to become familiar with its contents. Discussions of the book will be an important element in creating understanding about the language and content of the observation and evaluation process.

Observations shall be recorded using the District’s form (Appendix B). The Summary section for each Domain shall reflect the discussion that has taken place between the evaluator and the teacher both before and after the lesson, noting the strengths and the areas for improvement of the lesson. Evaluators must substantiate their assessment by a written narrative using examples specifically related to the rubrics. The observation form is not a checklist. The opportunity to note evidence of the components is provided only as a vehicle for documenting information, much the same as “scripting” is an observational technique designed to provide verbatim feedback to a teacher. The evaluator, in accordance with the behaviors described in the rubrics, shall determine the overall assessment of a domain.

Upon receipt of the observation in its final form (Appendix B), the teacher shall sign the observation. Such signature shall indicate only that the teacher has received the form, read it, and had a post-observation conference with the evaluator. Such signature shall, in no way, indicate agreement or disagreement with the content of the observation. The teacher shall have the right to attach written comments to the observation and such response shall be placed in the teacher’s personnel file as a part of the observation. The teacher shall have the right to be accompanied by a representative of the Norwalk Federation of Teachers (NFT) at any consultation with an evaluator regarding the teacher’s performance. One copy of the written final observation shall be given to the teacher; the evaluator shall keep one copy, and one copy shall be sent to the Human Resources Officer for filing in the teacher’s personnel file.
II. Schedule of Formal Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Tenured Teacher</th>
<th>Completed by</th>
<th>Completion Date (second, third and fourth year teachers)</th>
<th>Completion Date (first year teachers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Planning conference (orientation to the areas of focus for the coming year)</td>
<td>Evaluator &amp; Teacher</td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>September 15 (may be done as a group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First observation &amp; conferences</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>October 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second observation &amp; conferences</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>December 15</td>
<td>November 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third observation &amp; conferences (required for non-tenured teachers in their first year of appraisal)</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenured Teacher</th>
<th>Completed by</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Planning conference (orientation to the areas of focus for the coming year)</td>
<td>Evaluator &amp; Teacher</td>
<td>October 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First observation &amp; conferences</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>February 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second observation &amp; conferences</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Evaluation for all</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>June 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is critical that the schedule for observations is strictly followed except for rare and highly unusual circumstances.

Formal observations follow a cognitive coaching model of pre-observation conference and discussion, observation of the lesson, and post-observation conference and discussion supported by self-reflection. While written observations will take place only after formal observations, evaluators are encouraged to drop in classrooms routinely to observe teachers’ work in a more informal fashion. There shall be a minimum of three drop in visits for each teacher each semester. An impression created by drop-in visits that will be referenced in the formal evaluation shall have been discussed with the teacher prior to the evaluation. Reference to these informal observations should be made in the formal evaluation to the extent that the informal observations are relevant to assessing overall performance.

Teacher Evaluation

I. The Process
Teachers shall be evaluated annually. The evaluation shall be a just and fair assessment of a teacher’s performance over the course of a year. “Distinguished” performance should receive recognition in the annual evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an assessment
that will determine continued employment in the District, and to provide meaningful feedback with the intent of improving performance and stimulating professional growth.

The purpose of the appraisal phase of the evaluation cycle is to provide a more closely supervised assessment of a teacher’s performance using the classroom observation process as the principal means of assessment. The professional growth phase of the cycle continues the evaluator’s responsibility for assessing performance but allows the teacher who has demonstrated a high level of performance more independence in meeting professional responsibilities.

A teacher’s evaluation shall include an assessment of overall performance. This includes the teacher’s level of skill in providing instruction as measured on the same rubrics used in the observation process, student progress, and the teacher’s attendance and punctuality.

The evaluation for teachers on appraisal and directed professional growth shall be completed on the District’s form. (See Appendix D.) The overall assessment of a domain shall be determined by the majority of the assessments of each of the components of the domain. For example, if the majority of the components of Domain 3, Instruction, are assessed as proficient, the domain assessment shall be considered “Proficient”. Specific recommendations must be made for any domain that has been assessed as unsatisfactory or basic.

Non-tenured teachers who may not be recommended for employment beyond the current year shall receive a mid-year assessment by December 15 in addition to the annual evaluation. All categories in the evaluation document shall be completed. The first and second observations and the mid-year evaluation assessment with the reasons why the administrator is considering a non-renewal beyond the current year shall be sent to the Human Resources Officer by December 15.

Tenured teachers who have submitted their resignation for purposes of retirement by October 1 shall be observed through the informal drop-in process. All provisions of the evaluation process are still applicable.

The evaluation shall refer to supporting information that substantiates the assessment. Supporting information may be provided by both the teacher and the evaluator. Examples of documentation include such items as lesson plans, formal written observations, instructional units, evidence of student learning through samples of student work from early and later in the school year, other measures of academic performance, examples of communication with parents, evidence of the teacher having become part of the school’s learning community, and a teacher’s written self-assessment. Teachers may also bring materials to the evaluation conference to add to this collection. The evaluator will be able to use this information for a meaningful discussion about the teacher’s performance and student progress. The primary evaluator shall not present any negative information at the final evaluation conference unless such information had been discussed previously with the teacher.

In the case of non-tenured teachers, the Superintendent will be able to make the determination about continued employment based on the breadth and depth of evidence.
Primary evaluators shall meet with the teacher to review the draft evaluation and to provide guidance, constructive criticism, commendations, and suggestions for improvement before the final draft is completed.

II. Differentiated Evaluation

The District’s model provides a differentiated approach to evaluation as illustrated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Tenured Teachers</th>
<th>Tenured Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisal</td>
<td>Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisal* (if distinguished in Year 1, then Directed Professional Growth)</td>
<td>Directed or Self-directed Professional Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
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<td>Directed Professional Growth</td>
<td>Directed or Self-directed Professional Growth</td>
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<td>Year 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenured - Directed or Self-directed Professional Growth</td>
<td>Appraisal (Repeat of cycle)</td>
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<td>Year 6</td>
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<td>Appraisal as a tenured teacher</td>
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*A. Non-tenured teachers – Appraisal and Growth*

Non-tenured teachers who have a continuous forty school month probationary period are those teachers who have never taught, or have never taught in Connecticut, or have never taught in a public school irrespective of location, or who have held tenure in Connecticut but have not taught for a period of more than five years. This cycle will last four years.

Non-tenured teachers who have a continuous twenty school month probationary period are those teachers who have held tenure in another school district in Connecticut within the last five years and are new to the Norwalk Public Schools.

Non-tenured teachers on a continuous forty-month cycle shall complete their first and second years on Appraisal. Non-tenured teachers on a continuous forty-month cycle shall complete their third and fourth years in Directed Professional Growth.

Non-tenured teachers on a continuous twenty-month cycle shall complete their first and second years in the Appraisal process before moving to tenured status in Year 3 (Directed Professional Growth) of the cycle. Those teachers who have earned tenure elsewhere or whose performance
on Appraisal while non-tenured has been “Distinguished” in both years, may be placed on Self-directed Professional Growth status when tenured.

Appraisal

Participants

1. All teachers who are new to the profession;
2. All teachers who are new to Norwalk who may have taught elsewhere, whether or not they had earned tenure.

Requirements

1. Observations – Under normal circumstances, there shall be a minimum of three in the teacher’s first year and a minimum of two in the second year of teaching. The pre-observation form and conference and the post-observation conference report is required for all observations. Three drop-in visits are also required. (See p. 14.)
2. Where required, teachers shall have a Mentor assigned for one year. Every attempt will be made to match the mentor and the mentee by certification or area specialty. Priority in assigning mentors shall be given to those teachers who are in their first year in the profession or those who have been given certification through alternative means.
3. The teacher shall provide evidence of completion of, or sufficient progress towards, meeting BEST requirements by the end of the second year.
4. Completion of a Self-Reflection form prior to the completion of the final evaluation. (See Appendix E.)
5. The primary evaluator in subject areas for which the state has no portfolio requirement may assign a portfolio completion requirement.

Resources

1. Building Administration
2. Connecticut Common Core of Teaching;
3. Collegial collaborator assigned by mutual agreement;
4. Attendance at workshops;
5. District supervisors, subject area leaders, department chairpersons, team leaders, and grade level colleagues;
6. Attendance and participation in BEST workshops.

Directed Professional Growth

Participants

1. All teachers who have completed Appraisal.

Requirements

1. Observations - There shall be a minimum of two in each of the years of Directed Professional Growth. The pre-observation form and conference and the post-observation conference report are required for all observations. Three drop-in visits are also required. (See p. 14.)
2. Completion of a Self Reflection form. (See Appendix E.)
3. Completion of BEST requirements in accordance with State guidelines or policies.
4. The primary evaluator in subject areas for which the state has no portfolio requirement may assign a portfolio completion requirement.

**Resources**

1. The primary evaluator (identified at the beginning of the school year).
2. A collegial collaborator (assigned by mutual agreement).
3. Attendance at professional workshops is strongly encouraged.
4. District supervisors, subject area leaders, department chairpersons, team leaders, and grade level colleagues will provide guidance.

**B. Tenured Teachers – Appraisal and Professional Growth**

A complete cycle of Appraisal followed by Professional Growth is completed after four years.

**Appraisal**

**Participants**

1. Teachers shall be on Appraisal after completion of three years on Professional Growth.

**Requirements**

1. Observations – A minimum of two (at least one per semester) are required.
2. Completion of the pre-observation worksheet (Appendix A) and conference, and the post-observation conference worksheet (Appendix C) and conference are required for all observations. Three drop-in visits are also required. (See p. 14.)
3. The first observation shall be completed prior to Feb.1. The second observation shall be completed by May 1.
4. Completion of annual Self-Reflection form. (See Appendix E.)
5. The evaluation shall be completed by June 1.

**Resources**

1. The primary evaluator with input from other appropriate administrators and evaluators will provide guidance and recommend activities to strengthen teacher performance.

**Directed and Self-Directed Professional Growth**

**A. Directed Professional Growth**

If a teacher is assessed as less than proficient on any domain, the areas of focus will be on those components that are less than proficient. Alternatively, if a teacher is assessed as proficient in all domains and the components within them, the areas of focus will be on that number of components necessary to move the teacher to the distinguished level beginning with Domain 3 and then Domain 2. Barring evidence to the contrary, teachers will be assumed to have continued as proficient on those components so identified in the prior evaluation. Evaluators will not need to provide examples of evidence for those components where an assumption of proficiency has
been made. Through this process, observations can become targeted for improving performance on specific components.

**Participants**

1. Tenured teachers who have completed the appraisal phase of the cycle and who have not yet entered the Self-Directed Professional Growth phase.
2. Tenured teachers who were on self-directed professional growth who will be teaching in a different level assignment, e.g., from middle to elementary, or in a different certification area from the prior year.
3. Tenured teachers who are changing grade assignments within the same building shall be given the opportunity to mutually determine with their primary evaluator if changing to directed professional growth would assist them.

**Requirements**

1. Observations – A minimum of two (at least one per semester) are required.
2. Completion of the pre-observation conference worksheet and conference and the post-observation conference are required for all observations. Three drop-in visits are also required. (See p. 14.)
3. The first observation shall be completed prior to Feb.1. The second observation shall be completed by May 1.
4. Completion of a Self-Reflection form. (See Appendix E.)
5. The evaluation shall be completed by June 1.

**Resources**

1. The primary evaluator with input from other appropriate administrators and instructional supervisors or specialists will provide guidance and recommend activities to strengthen teacher performance.

**B. Self-Directed Professional Growth**

Those teachers who have distinguished themselves by outstanding professional performance, and a significant record of effecting student growth are exemplars for their colleagues. They have earned the opportunity to participate in an independent professional growth opportunity that will enhance the value of the learning community, as well as benefit the individual. Teachers in this phase recognize the high caliber of work expected and the dedication and discipline necessary to succeed in this area.

The ultimate goal of this process is to create a model of teacher autonomy where teachers will monitor, analyze, and evaluate their own classroom and professional practice. When involved with self-reflection, teachers can let ideas develop that might not otherwise have been examined. Projects and activities will come from this thinking that the teacher believes will enhance his/her own professional growth. The primary evaluator will serve as the facilitator and critical friend in helping analyze and develop those ideas in addition to evaluating the work of the teacher.

The professional growth activities that emanate from this process are expected to advance the substantive knowledge of the teacher and, potentially, the work of others. Evaluators will use
this collaborative process to help teachers construct their own knowledge, to offer suggestions and guidance as teachers complete their activity, and to provide a final assessment of the activity.

The intent of this phase is to provide a professional development program for distinguished teachers who will be taking greater personal responsibility for their own professional growth. Evaluators will continue to informally observe classes of those teachers who are in the self-directed professional growth phase.

Participants

1. All tenured teachers who have completed the Appraisal phase of this cycle and who have been assessed as “Distinguished” will participate in a self-directed professional growth process in lieu of the formal classroom observation model.

Eligibility

The “Distinguished” teacher is defined as one who has been assessed in either Appraisal or the Directed Professional Growth phase as “Distinguished” in at least two of the four domains and assessed in the remaining domains as “Proficient”. No component on Domains 2 (The Classroom Environment) and 3 (Instruction) may be assessed below the Proficient level. No more than one component in Domains 1 (Planning and Preparation) and 4 (Professional Responsibilities) may be assessed at the “Basic” level.

A domain is defined as being evaluated as “Distinguished” when a majority of the components are characterized as “Distinguished” with all others as “Proficient.”

If a teacher has had a component in Domain 1 or 4 assessed at the “Basic” level, the teacher must include as part of the plan for the self-directed activity, a strategy for improving performance in this component.

Parameters of Self-Directed Professional Growth Activities

1. The primary evaluator must approve all projects. The Superintendent or his/her designee reserves the right to review all proposals. Proposals should be developed that relate to the needs of the district and/or the school or class as well as promoting individual professional growth. Non-completion of the project within the agreed upon timeframe will result in an unsatisfactory evaluation for the year unless there are compelling extenuating circumstances which shall be approved by the primary evaluator, subject to the review of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

2. The process will begin with the filing of a written draft to the primary evaluator. Activities shall begin no later than on or about October 1.

Guidelines

1. Projects must be substantive and comprehensive. Teachers may use preparation periods to work on the project. Activities may be developed individually or in small groups.
2. Progress meetings will be scheduled with the primary evaluator as necessary, but at least once a semester, to analyze and assess the products of the professional growth plan.
3. Plans may be multi-year, but require annual analysis and assessment.
4. Plans must tie directly to state standards, district goals and standards, and/or building objectives.
5. Risk will be supported if it is properly analyzed and assessed.
6. Special assistance will be provided to a teacher who has a significant change in their teaching responsibilities, e.g., a classroom teacher to a Reading teacher or an elementary teacher to a middle school teacher.
7. Where appropriate, continuing education units (CEUs) may be earned for the activity. Reference should be made in the proposal if this is the intent of the teacher.
8. Normally, teachers may engage in no more than two consecutive self-directed activities that are in the same category.

Format for the Proposal
Teachers must present to the primary evaluator a brief, but comprehensive, written proposal that will include the following components:
1. a description of the activity;
2. the rationale for the project;
3. how the activity will add to the value of the work of the teacher and/or the instructional program in the District, School or Class;
4. a specific product outcome including the process for sharing the results with the appropriate audience;
5. meeting dates with the primary evaluator to review progress;
6. length of the project. Projects may extend beyond one school year, but no longer than two;
7. an evaluation model to be approved and completed by the evaluator.

The primary evaluator and the teacher shall meet, as needed, for revision and/or clarification of the proposal before a final decision is made about acceptability. During the year, the primary evaluator shall meet with the teacher at least once prior to December 1 and at least once prior to April 1 to discuss the progress of the activity and to provide assistance as appropriate. Teachers must complete the self-reflection portion of the Teacher Self-Reflection Document and Supervisor Assessment for Professional Growth Plan (Appendix F) at the end of each year of the project.

Examples of Professional Growth Activities
The following represents examples of the type of projects that might be considered. This list is not considered exclusive. Teachers are referred to the District’s Instructional Plan as a further resource for developing activities.

1. Immersion in inquiry in a content area
Engaging in the kinds of learning that teachers are expected to practice with their students, e.g., inquiry-based science investigations or meaningful mathematics problem solving.

2. Immersion in the work world
Participating in an intensive experience in the day-to-day work of a businessperson, scientist or mathematician in an office, laboratory, or industrial setting to develop a greater understanding of work place needs and requirements. This activity will take place outside of the regular workday.
The intent of this experience would translate into a student program, unit or other work related project.

3. Developing instructional units
Designing and implementing a unit of instruction that addresses one or more topics or concepts and incorporates effective teaching and learning strategies to accomplish learning goals. This must be a comprehensive project. Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged. This project must be coordinated with the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, or his/her designee, to avoid overlap or duplication of an existing activity.

4. Curriculum development and adaptation
Creating new instructional materials and strategies or tailoring existing ones to meet the learning needs of students. This project must be coordinated with the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, or his/her designee, to avoid overlap or duplication of an existing activity.

5. Workshops, institutes, courses, and seminars focusing on a particular topic
Using structured opportunities outside of the classroom to focus intensively on topics of interest and learn from others with more expertise. These would be multiple experiences over the course of the activity. A written synopsis of these experiences and an oral presentation must be prepared for sharing with the appropriate audience. While the district would try to support these efforts, these activities would not normally occur during the school day. Dates for workshops, institutes, etc., must be identified in the proposal. Finally, financial support will be limited. Individuals pursuing this option must be aware that out-of-pocket expenditures for attendance may be necessary.

6. Action research
Examining teachers’ own teaching and their students’ learning by engaging in a research project in the classroom as the unit of study. Action research involves three stages: planning, implementation, and analysis and reflection. Teachers are referred to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development as a resource for action research. See http://www.ascd.org/trainingopportunities/ossd/actionresearch.html

7. Case discussions
Examining written narratives, research, and/or or videotapes of classroom teaching and examples of student modes of learning and preparing a written document for sharing with the appropriate audience that identifies the problems, issues, and research on the topic.

8. Study groups
Facilitating and participating in a series of regular, structured, and collaborative interactions regarding topics, related to District initiatives, identified by the group, with opportunities to examine new information, reflect on instructional practice, and create new understanding and potentially, a refinement in teacher practice. Groups may form across grades, schools, and levels.

9. Partnerships with scientists, mathematicians, or other professionals in business, industry, and universities
Working collaboratively with practicing scientists, mathematicians or other professionals in business, industry, and universities with the focus on improving teacher content knowledge, instructional materials, access to facilities, and acquiring new information.

10. Professional networks
Linking in person or through electronic means with other teachers or groups to explore and discuss topics of interest, set and pursue common goals, share information and strategies, and identify and address common problems.

11. Developing professional development skills
Building the skills and knowledge needed to create learning experiences for other educators and staff, including design of appropriate professional development strategies, presenting, demonstrating, and supporting teacher learning and change, and in-depth understanding of the content and pedagogy required for effective teaching and learning of students and other educators.

12. Technology for professional learning
Using various kinds of technology to learn content and pedagogy, including computers, telecommunications, videoconferencing, and other technology. The final product will include a series of lessons and study guides for teachers in the teacher’s field of certification.

13. Collegial Collaborator
Serving as a coach to non-tenured teachers in their second, third, or fourth year, and to tenured teachers who may benefit, or need, as a result of a performance improvement plan, the support and guidance of a distinguished teacher.

14. BEST Mentor
Serving as a BEST Mentor in accordance with State requirements.

15. Peer Coaching
A formal interaction process involving observations and conferences between two or more people who have the same job description and who share the same level of expertise to develop and improve instructional skills.

16. Teaching and/or participating in instructional activities across grades/schools and/or levels.

III. Evaluation Cycle
With the consent of the teacher who is on self-directed professional growth, the primary evaluator may complete the annual written evaluation on the performance of the teacher in a given school year no later than Dec. 1 of the following school year.

IV. Tenure
The Board of Education does not formally award tenure. In accordance with Section 10-151, (6) (a) of the Education law, tenure is attained by the completion of forty school months of continuous service for all teachers hired after July 1, 1996. By exception, a teacher who has
previously been tenured within the last five years prior to coming to the district by a Connecticut school district shall receive tenure after twenty school months of continuous service.

Careful observation and evaluation of a teacher’s performance, therefore, is crucial during this time period. Because of our commitment to provide students with teachers who are committed to all students learning, no non-tenured teacher shall be recommended for continued employment beyond a twenty or forty school month period whose evaluations indicate less than proficiency in any domain of assessment. Within the domains, no more than two components may be assessed at the basic level if a teacher’s employment is to continue. In the event of an assessment at a basic level of performance on any component, the primary evaluator shall develop a plan for the teacher to improve performance in those specific areas.

V. Professional Assistance Plan for Tenured Teachers  
(Focused Assistance and Intervention)

A. Focused Assistance

Definition

From time to time, a teacher may need assistance to address a specific area of performance. The expectation, in this case, is that with focused assistance over a brief period of time, the teacher’s unsatisfactory performance would improve to a basic level at a minimum.

Process

1. The primary evaluator shall meet with the teacher 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. The teacher may invite NFT representatives into the process.

2. 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.

3. The primary evaluator shall develop a specific plan to enable the teacher to improve performance. This plan shall include specific steps that will be taken to improve areas of weakness including:
   a. a cycle of classroom observations;
   b. resources to be accessed and utilized;
   c. a meeting schedule with the primary evaluator to review progress.
   d. a specific time frame for the Focused Assistance cycle.

4. 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.
5. During Focused Assistance, the teacher shall continue in his/her current evaluation phase.

6. 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. Intervention

Definition
When a tenured teacher’s performance has been evaluated as “Basic” in two or more domains 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. This teacher may be a candidate for termination.

A teacher whose performance during the school year has been documented to be “Basic” 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.

The decision to place a teacher in the intervention process shall be subject to review by the Superintendent.

Process
1. When the assessment of less than proficient performance has been made, the primary evaluator shall advise the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and the Director of Human Resources. The process shall be coordinated through the office of the District’s Human Resources Officer.

2. The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, the Human Resources Officer, the primary evaluator, the teacher and, at the discretion of the teacher, representatives of the NFT will meet to discuss the assessment and the need for substantial improvement in performance.

3. The primary evaluator shall develop a specific plan to enable the teacher to improve performance. This plan shall include specific steps that will be taken to improve areas of weakness including:
   a. a cycle of classroom observations
      i. A minimum of two observations (at least one per semester) are required.
      ii. Observations may be announced or unannounced. The pre-observation form and conference are required for announced observations. The post-observation conference and report is required for all observations.
      iii. The first observation shall be announced and completed prior to Feb.1. The second observation shall be completed by May 1. If the teacher is
placed on Intervention during the school year an appropriate observation schedule shall be determined.

iv. Completion of a Self Reflection form. (See Appendix E.)

b. resources to be accessed and utilized;

c. monthly meetings which shall be scheduled with the primary evaluator, the Human Resources Officer, the supervisor or instructional specialist, if appropriate, the teacher and, at the discretion of the teacher, representatives of the NFT to review progress in meeting the objectives of the plan.

4. The teacher on intervention must identify a distinguished teacher who shall serve as a resource to the administration in the development of the assistance plan and assist the teacher in the implementation 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. To the extent possible, the District shall facilitate this process by structuring time when the two teachers may meet.

5. At the conclusion of a reasonable period of time, usually six months to a year, the primary evaluator shall determine if sufficient progress has been made in meeting the objectives of the intervention plan or if a recommendation for termination shall be made.

Resources

1. Connecticut Common Core of Teaching;
2. Collegial collaborator assigned by mutual agreement;
3. Attendance at workshops;
4. District supervisors, subject area leaders, department chairpersons, team leaders, a distinguished teacher, and grade level colleagues.
5. Other resources identified by the evaluator and/or teacher as appropriate.

VI. Conflict Resolution

A Conflict Resolution Committee shall be composed of the Superintendent, Human Resources Officer, two representatives of the administrators’ union, and two representatives of the teachers’ union.

This committee shall discuss how to resolve work place problems, concerns, and conflicts regarding evaluation. Its decisions shall be final except in those cases subject to Connecticut State statutes and contractual grievance procedures.

VII. Training and Preparation for Implementation of the Evaluation Process

The Superintendent shall implement a continuous training program for administrators to develop understanding of the plan and to develop the skills necessary to develop understanding with teachers. Training shall be provided for new administrators. A further purpose of the training is to develop the skills that will enable administrators to use the components of the observation and evaluation process to develop teacher’s skills.
Danielson and McGreal’s⁶ Enhancing Professional Practice, A Framework for Teaching and Teacher Evaluation to Enhance Professional Practice shall be used as a guiding document in addition to other resources related to this model.

When finished, and as revisions occur, this document shall be printed and distributed to all teachers. All teachers shall receive a copy of Components of Professional Practice (© Educational Testing Service, 2001). Principals shall meet with teachers in September of each school year to discuss the contents of the plan and to create understanding. Continuing training shall take place during the school year. Newly hired teachers, and long-term substitutes assigned to a vacancy shall also receive a copy of the document and shall receive an orientation about its contents in the first year of their employment.

VIII. Assessment of Observation/Evaluation Model
The District’s administrators shall meet annually to discuss and review the District’s evaluation and observation process as outlined in this document and to make recommendations about the revising of this plan. Teacher input shall also be solicited for purposes of revising the plan. The committee shall meet annually to consider these recommendations and to make appropriate changes. The Board of Education shall annually receive a revised document recommended by the committee for adoption.

Professional Development Plans

Effective professional development does not occur in a vacuum. It is grounded in a set of articulated assumptions that reflect the District’s belief about what should be taking place in schools and classrooms if all students are to learn and meet high standards of performance.

I. Assumptions

The instructional work of the Norwalk Public Schools is guided by:

- the District’s Mission Statement;
- the Board’s Goals for the District;
- the District’s Instructional Plan, and
- a Research-Based Planning Model for the implementation of the instructional plan.

The District’s Mission Statement describes the purpose of the educational system.

The mission of the Norwalk Public Schools is to create a supportive learning community rooted in the belief that all children can learn. Our educators will challenge all students to demonstrate high levels of achievement on a wide variety of clearly defined standards.

Our students will graduate with the skills, knowledge, attitudes and experiences necessary to ensure their highest potential for success and life-long learning.

The Board’s goal for Instruction for the District asserts:

We will build the Norwalk Public Schools into an exemplary district characterized by a cohesive and coordinated academic system with a set of clearly defined performance-based outcomes for all students.

Our work as a learning community will:

- emphasize mastery of knowledge, strategies and skills;
- develop in our students the habits of thinking, cooperation, and self-discipline;
- focus on results;
- ensure excellence and equity of opportunity;
- value diversity;
- instill respectfulness and responsibility.

This goal is implemented through the Norwalk Public Schools Instructional Plan. The plan is annually revised.
Norwalk Public Schools Instructional Plan

Board of Education Instructional Goal
- Standards based expectations
- NPS graduation requirements
- High expectations for all students
- Access for all students to challenging content
- Close the achievement gap by focusing on the performance of all students who have not met expected standards
- Value diversity, respectfulness, and responsibility

Indicators of Achievement
- Student performance on State tests
- Graduation rates
- Assessments based on student work

Curriculum Development & Instruction
Evaluation → Development → Prof. Devl.

Objectives: 2007/08

Curriculum Review/Revision
- Elementary & Secondary ELL

Program Initiatives
- Implementation of Assessments: K-8 in reading and writing; K-5 in Math; K-8 in Social Studies
- Development of Technology exit assessments in Grade 5
- Implementation of Math Program: Gr 3-5
- Development of District-wide RTI Plan in Reading
- Review of Special Education Program
- Development of MS Reading Program
- Enhance resources for teachers and parent communication re ELL program

Professional Development
- Writing across all Curricula at Secondary level
- Integration of technology in Tech Ed and FACS

Best Practices/Staff Development Priorities
- Reflect → Teach → Assess → Reflect
- High level thinking and academically rigorous problem solving in classroom tasks
- Focus on students as intellectually active workers
- Emphasis on reflection/discussion about the instructional core, i.e., the interaction between student and teacher in the presence of content
- Integrating technology into the curriculum
- Using student performance data and formative assessments to set goals and plan instruction

Focus: 2007/2008
- Continue District and School Growth Plans as student achievement improvement model using feedback from State reviews
- Review and recommend revisions to Board policies as related to the Instructional Program
- Enhance the learning organization through instructionally focused norms of practice
- Develop Curriculum Benchmarks and Assessments

Multi-Year Priorities
- Strong instructional leadership
- Developing learning communities through articulated norms of practice
- Continuous assessment of system capacity
- Accountability through assessment of stated objectives in the district/school growth plans
- Effective supervision to improve performance
- Academic intervention to ensure student success
- Enhanced academic opportunities for all students
- Strong parental and community involvement
- Strong connections with pre- and after school programs
- Strong linkages with community agencies and organizations, e.g., NEF, NCC, Norwalk ACTS for Children
The implementation of the plan may be represented through the following graphic organizer.

Through the focus on the instructional core, i.e., the interaction between student and teacher in the presence of content, and based on assessment of relevant student performance data, schools annually develop specific plans designed to improve student achievement7. The performance goals for student achievement, articulated in specific and measurable terms, also serve as the means for identifying the professional growth (process goals) needed by teachers to ensure achieving the student performance goals.

### A Research-based Planning Model
#### Guiding Implementation of the Norwalk Instructional Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on the Instructional Core</th>
<th>Results-Driven</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus of improvement is on the instructional core, i.e., the interaction between teacher and student in the presence of content.</td>
<td>Effective means of assessing student progress in attaining valued outcomes based on benchmarks and other measures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>• GAP analysis of actual and desired results</td>
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<td>• Uses a variety of strategies that recognize the differences in student learning styles</td>
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<td>• Instructional tasks are academically rigorous and require students to focus on instructional problems in all content areas</td>
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<td>• Intervention is provided when assessment determines need for further instruction, rather than remediation at a later point in time</td>
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<td>• Instruction is assessed based on its impact on student learning</td>
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<td>• Requires that teachers routinely meet with each other around matters of instructional practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>• Needed and existing capacity and resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focused to identify those standards in each content area that</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o endure, i.e., recur in the skills and knowledge that students must display</td>
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<tr>
<td>o provide leverage, i.e., are associated with success in other standards, and are</td>
<td></td>
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<td>o essential for the next level of instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>• Data-driven dialogue guides district and site-based planning for student growth</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Periodic, short term, and meaningful to provide feedback to students and to guide teachers in making instructional decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistent across grades and levels across the district</td>
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#### Learner Centered

- Shared body of knowledge of how students construct knowledge and strategies for effective teacher decision-making
  - o Professional Development
  - o Performance
  - o Traditional standardized measures
- Focus on the instructional core outlines the roles of those in the classroom
  - o Student as worker
  - o Teacher as instructor, coach, and modeler
  - o Honors student voice/choice
- Focuses on student work and learning
- Instructional “Match”
  - o Task analysis
  - o Essential understandings and strategies
  - o Backward design
- Spiral curriculum
- High expectations for all students

#### Systems Thinking

- Common understanding of Essential 21st Century Outcomes and standards linked change
- Community of Learners Culture which develops norms that provide:
  - o Thoughtful, continuous, and respectful dialogue with a focus on instructional work
  - o Adults providing learning models for students
  - o Administrators learning with teachers and students
  - o Board and Community understanding and supporting the instructional program
- Common Language of Instruction
- Focuses evaluation/supervision on examination of the teaching/learning process, not inspecting teachers
- Centralized (District) and De-centralized (School) Strategies which include those that are identical, similar, and different across all schools
- Using points of high leverage as vehicles for planned change
- Continuous assessment of system progress
The research-based planning model reflects the work of many researchers who have contributed to the concept of professional learning communities. DuFour et al. provide a valuable synthesis.

The common theme that runs through the District’s Mission Statement, the District Goals, the Instructional Plan, and the Implementation Model is that all students can and will learn. We expect that students will demonstrate their competencies in accordance with high performance expectations. School faculty, under the leadership of building administration and supported by central office staff, are responsible for developing specific school growth plans to meet the goals of (1) improving student achievement, (2) closing the achievement gap, and (3) supporting the professional growth needs of teachers and administrators in order to improve instruction. Professional development, which leads to system improvement, must be framed within District parameters centering on student achievement and the school growth plans.

As Elmore has stated, “…the practice of improvement is largely about moving whole organizations—teachers, administrators, and schools—towards the culture, structure, norms and processes that support quality professional development in the service of student learning.”

Professional development plans, therefore, must operate on the assumption that teachers and administrators are involved in teaching to and learning from each other. This work must be part of the form and fabric of the life of the school. The role of the District’s central office staff is to serve in a supportive and collaborative capacity in the work of the schools, provide leadership in the strategic thinking about the areas of instructional improvement, and articulate a clear sense of purpose and direction related to the Instructional Plan.

Joyce and Showers contend there are three purposes around which professional development plans can be organized. These are:

1. the enhancement of individual clinical skills and academic knowledge;
2. the study of school improvement, and
3. district-wide initiatives to improve the educational program.

Both the SMART and the process goals of the School Growth Plans relate to the first two purposes. District supported efforts to revise curriculum, develop benchmarks and assessments, and develop programs relate to the third. These purposes are embedded in standards of the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) and should be identifiable in the School growth plans.

---

11 SMART goals relate to improvement in student achievement. They are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based. Process goals are those that relate to the improvement of school climate, pedagogical skills, and system assessment necessary for effective professional learning communities.
Plans. Because of the direct relationship they bear to the process for developing school professional development plans, they are worth repeating here.

**Context**
Learning Communities: Staff development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.

Leadership: Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.

Resources: Staff development that improves the learning of all students requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

**Process**
Data-Driven: Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.

Evaluation: Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.

Research-Based: Staff development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to apply research to decision making.

Design: Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.

Learning: Staff development that improves the learning of all students applies knowledge about human learning and change.

Collaboration: Staff development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.

**Content**
Equity: Staff development that improves the learning of all students prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly, and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for students’ academic achievement.

Quality Teaching: Staff development that improves the learning of all students deepens educators’ content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.
Family Involvement: Staff development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

(Source: National Staff Development Council, http://www.nsdc.org/educatorindex.htm)

II. Professional Learning Communities

As determined by the Board of Education,

The mission of the Norwalk Public Schools is to create a supportive learning community rooted in the belief that all children can learn. Our educators will challenge all students to demonstrate high levels of achievement on a wide variety of clearly defined standards. Our students will graduate with the skills, knowledge, attitudes and experiences necessary to ensure their highest potential for success and life-long learning.

Implicit in this statement is that students will engage in demanding academic content, that this level of rigor is expected for all students, and that students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills before receiving their diplomas. If students achieving at high levels is to occur at scale, then it is necessary that teachers and administrators engage in a continuous process of examining practice for purposes of improvement in light of student needs as identified through the use of student performance data. If students achieving at high levels is to occur at scale, then it is necessary that teachers and administrators acknowledge that the examination and improvement of practice is not, and should not be, a solitary practice. If students achieving at high levels is to occur at scale, then part of the routine work of administrators and teachers is in developing, as part of school norms, the expectation and strategies for examining the quality and level of performance of student work assessed at frequent intervals. As Elmore has stated:

Certain types of structures are more likely than others to intensify and focus on norms of good practice; organizations in which face-to-face relationships dominate impersonal bureaucratic ones; organizations in which people routinely interact around common problems of practice; and organizations that focus on the results of their work for students, rather than on the working conditions of professionals.\(^\text{12}\)

These structures are professional learning communities.

A professional learning community may be defined as a group designed, “…to develop the collective capacity of a staff to work together to achieve the fundamental purpose of the school: high levels of learning for all students.”\(^\text{13}\)

Sebring and Bryk note:


Formal structures provide only the skeleton of a productive school. How people behave, interact, learn, and work together is what breathes life into a school. Schools that are improving are characterized by cooperative work relations among all adults. To achieve this state requires a strong base of social trust among teachers, between teachers and parents, between teachers and the principal, and between teachers and students.\(^{14}\)

It is essential, therefore, that as part of each School Growth Plan, there is a written plan for professional development that includes not only strategies for improving instructional practice but also strategies that develop the interpersonal skills necessary for a learning community to thrive.

A. Purpose

The purpose of writing the plan (Appendix G), as a subtext within the school growth plan, is to provide a written record of a thoughtful planning process. Its value lies in providing documentation of the reflection that resulted in the plan. As with any effective planning, flexibility is crucial in making those modifications that may be necessary over the course of the year. All professional development planning must be cohesive, i.e., aligned with the goals identified in the School Growth Plan.

The professional development plan is a coordinated effort to provide those professional development activities that will (1) improve the skills and knowledge of teachers in order for them to address the instructional needs of students and improve the achievement of students across all grades and (2) improve the professional climate to enable the learning of students and teachers to flourish. The plan, therefore, needs to be organized around the answers to a number of central questions:

- As we examine the performance of students, what are the areas where we need to enhance our skills in order to improve student achievement?
- How is the plan consistent with district-wide initiatives, e.g., closing the achievement gap, improving the performance of all subgroups?
- How will we know that the professional development activities have resulted in changes in teacher practice?
- How will we assess whether or not these changes have impacted positively on student learning?
- What are the norms of practice that we believe are essential for all administrators and teachers to demonstrate if we are behaving as a learning community?
- How will we assess the norms of practice we have identified for our learning community?

All of the activities, whether they involve workshops, speakers, study groups, etc., should be targeted and focused based on the responses to these questions. Marzano\(^{15}\) quotes Garet, \textit{et al.},


who conducted a survey of 1000 teachers and reported that those features of staff development with the strongest relationship to reported change in teacher behavior are (1) focus on content knowledge, (2) opportunities for active learning, and (3) overall coherence of the staff development activities. These findings reveal that pedagogical knowledge must be presented to teachers in the context of their specific subject areas; teachers must return to their classrooms and actually use the learned strategies in a classroom environment in which they informally examine the impact on student achievement, and that the staff development program is perceived as a coherent, integrated whole with staff development opportunities building on each other.

Another essential element in effective professional development is an acknowledgement that, while outside resources can be helpful, teachers themselves possess the knowledge to enable student achievement to improve if they engage in serious professional discourse about their practice and its impact on student achievement. Of necessity, this requires that teachers meet regularly in a focused setting to discuss their practice.

Professional development opportunities must recognize and acknowledge that each department will require the time and support to improve performance of students in the content area, irrespective of the size of the department. The intrinsic value of each department to the overall instructional experience of the student must be honored and respected. Therefore, while there may be times that all teachers in a building may engage in a common professional development activity, e.g., writing across the curriculum, there must also be time set aside for departmental work to be done as well.

B. Assessment of Teacher Needs
The school growth plans should identify the data that has provided the basis for selecting the areas of focus.

School data might include the results of a teacher survey on particular competencies, e.g., technology, or an analysis of student performance on state-wide tests delineated in a way that will identify specific areas for improvement. The identification of professional development strategies are essentially responses to teachers asking themselves the questions, “What do we want to get good at and why?”

C. Focus Areas
The Best Practice/Staff Development Priorities are identified annually in the District’s Instructional Plan. These areas of focus are generic to the entire District but provide the basis for specific skill sets to be developed. For example, a focus on academic rigor may lead to professional development in lesson design or the examination of student work. Each school or department, in addition, may identify particular areas where they have chosen to focus based on their analysis of student achievement data.

Recognizing that the intensity of the experiences precludes focusing on many areas at once, the plan should concentrate on no more than three or four areas that have the greatest school priority.


D. Activities
Plans for professional development will include a variety of activities centered on specific areas of focus. Suggested activities include:

- Workshop attendance
- Workshops presentation
- Speakers
- Peer-to-peer support
- Visitations
- Discussion groups
- Study groups
- Action research
- Collaboration with consultants
- Committee work
- Attending conferences and seminars
- Joint planning of lessons
- Piloting of new programs
- Experimentation with research results

The plan, therefore, should include a comprehensive listing of the activities relative to each of the areas of focus. Note that these activities are the same as those that a teacher in the Self-directed Professional Growth phase of the evaluation cycle might choose. The intent is to connect these teacher choices with the needs of the school and district. As activities are developed and completed, an Activity Worksheet (Appendix H) should be used as a means of assessing the effectiveness of the process.

E. Implementation Evaluation
Effective plans include the means to assess whether or not the plan has been successful. The evaluation (Appendix I) should consider these questions and provide documented evidence in the answers:

1. How, and to what extent, has the statement of purpose been accomplished?
2. Have the activities been appropriate?
3. What worked particularly well about the plan?
4. What should be done differently in the future?
5. How have we progressed as a learning community?
6. What implications does the implementation of this year’s plan have on the development of next year’s professional development activities?

Samples indicators for assessment include:

- Use of acquired skills, strategies, and tools as reported in observations, evaluations, and teacher logs
- Student performance outcomes, e.g., an increase in test scores
• Improvement of student classroom performance
• A decrease in incidents of student discipline
• Samples of completed assessment tools
• Classroom observation data
• Positive results on teacher surveys
• Participant feedback
• Improved student attendance
• Increased teacher and student use of technology
• Reduction in student achievement gaps from expected standards of performance

The assessment process should identify the indicator of success and the process by which the measurement will occur. Results of the intended activities should be measurable and clearly identified. It is important to know participants’ reaction to staff development activities, whether or not learning has occurred, if new learning is being used, and, most importantly, if the results of professional development program are having an impact on student learning. Providing answers to these assessment questions will require different tools and different timelines. Without an assessment of the impact of professional development on student learning, we cannot know if the activities are worthwhile.

**Conclusion**

The Norwalk Public Schools Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development plan provides the means by which the District will integrate its teacher supervision and evaluation process and the professional development plans with the specific objectives of improving teacher performance and student achievement. By reflecting annually on our collective performance as a learning community, we intend to reach the goal of every student performing at the standards established by the Board of Education and the State of Connecticut.
PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE WORKSHEET

NAME: SCHOOL:

DEPARTMENT/GRADE: DATE:

Please bring this completed worksheet to the pre-observation conference with any materials you will be distributing to students. This document is not to be part of the observation form or the teacher’s personnel file unless the teacher wishes to include it in lieu of a lesson plan. The length of the document is determined by the teacher but must adequately respond to the questions. Both parties are encouraged to make whatever notes they feel are relevant to the discussion. The outcome of this discussion may result in a reworking of the teacher’s lesson plan. Teachers are not expected to revise and rewrite this worksheet. However, should a lesson design require major revisions such that a planned observation is being rescheduled, the Pre-Observation worksheet should be redone in anticipation of the Pre-Observation conference.

This worksheet is directly related to Danielson’s Domain I, Planning and Preparation. See Components of Professional Practice, (Educational Testing Service, 2001), 9-21. References in parentheses are to particular components.

1. Describe the class. Include specific needs of students, differentiated instructional strategies that may be used to meet these needs, and special conditions that may exist. (1b – Knowledge of Students, 1c – Selecting Instructional Goals, 1e – Designing Coherent Instruction)

2. Describe the goals of the lesson and how these goals relate to curriculum and standards. (1b – Knowledge of Students, 1c – Selecting Instructional Goals, 1e – Designing Coherent Instruction)

3. How is this lesson connected to students’ prior knowledge and how will this lesson be connected to lessons that follow? (1a- Knowledge of content and pedagogy, 1c – Selecting Instructional Goals and 1e – Designing Coherent Instruction)

4. How will students be actively engaged in the lesson? (1e – Designing Coherent Instruction)

5. What materials and resources will be used in the lesson? (1d-Knowledge of Resources)

6. How will you assess what students have learned/understood? (1f – Assessing Student Learning)

7. What support activities or assignments, if any, have you planned based on this lesson? (1b – Knowledge of Students, 1e – Designing Coherent Instruction)
Observation Form

NAME: ___________________________ SCHOOL: ___________________________

Subject & grade: ________________ Observer: ____________________________

Date of observation: ________________

Date of Pre-Conference: ________________ Date of Post-Conference: ________________

Description of Class: ___________________________

Specific Components of Focus during Lesson, (e.g., 1a, 3c, etc.):

Determined: _____ Collaboratively _____ by Observer

Other Salient Points: ___________________________

Note: Pre-Observation Worksheet, Lesson Plan or Observer’s Notes of Pre-Conference, and Rubrics to be attached.
DOMAIN 1 – PLANNING AND PREPARATION (Check all components where evidence is found.)

___ Demonstrating Knowledge of Content  ___ Demonstrating Knowledge of Pedagogy
___ Demonstrating Knowledge of Students  ___ Selecting Instructional Goals
___ Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources  ___ Designing Coherent Instruction
___ Assessing Student Learning

SUMMARY (A description of the strengths of the teacher’s planning process and areas which can be improved.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

DOMAIN 2 – THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT (Check all components where evidence is found.)

___ Establishing a Culture for Learning  ___ Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
___ Managing Classroom Procedures  ___ Managing Student Behavior
___ Organizing Physical Space

SUMMARY (A description of the strengths of the learning climate of the class and areas which can be improved.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___
DOMAINE 3 – INSTRUCTION (Check all components where evidence is found.)

___ Communicating Clearly and Accurately
___ Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
___ Engaging Students in Learning
___ Providing Feedback to Students
___ Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

SUMMARY (A description of the strengths of the teacher’s actual lesson and areas which can be improved.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

DOMAINE 4 - PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (Check component if evidence is found)

___ Reflecting on Teaching

SUMMARY (A description of the strengths of the teacher’s own assessment of the lesson and areas which can be improved.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Unsatisfactory _____ Basic _____ Proficient _____ Distinguished _____

EVALUATOR’S OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF LESSON

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

Teacher Acknowledgment
I have reviewed this document and discussed the contents with the observer. My signature means that I have been advised of the contents of this observation and does not necessarily imply that I agree with the content.

____________________________  ______________________
Teacher Signature  Observer Signature
GUIDED REFLECTION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR POST-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE

NAME: \hspace{1cm} SCHOOL:

DEPARTMENT/GRADE: \hspace{1cm} DATE OF LESSON:

Teachers should use these questions as a guide in reflecting on the lesson. They will be used as the basis for discussion by the observer in the post-observation conference. The length of the document is determined by the teacher but must adequately respond to the questions. References in parentheses are to Domains and components of the Danielson model.

As I reflect on the lesson:

1. Did the students learn what I intended? Were my instructional goals met? (1c – Selecting Instructional Goals)

2. How do I know? (1f – Assessing Student Learning)

3. To what extent were students productively engaged? (1b – Knowledge of Students, 3c – Engaging Students in Learning)

4. How well did I differentiate the instruction given the range of students in my class? (1b – Knowledge of Students, 3c – Engaging Students in Learning)

5. Did I alter my goals or instructional plan as I taught the lesson? Why? (3e – Demonstrating Flexibility)

6. If I were to teach this lesson again, what might I do differently? (4a – Reflecting on Teaching)

NOT TO BE INCLUDED IN PERSONNEL FILE
EVALUATION DOCUMENT FOR APPRAISAL AND DIRECTED PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

NAME: SCHOOL:

DEPARTMENT/GRADE:

MID-YEAR (To be completed only for those non-tenured teachers who are being considered for non-renewal ___

ANNUAL ___

1 - PLANNING AND PREPARATION
1a (i): Demonstrating Knowledge of Content
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

1a (ii): Demonstrating Knowledge of Pedagogy
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

1c: Selecting Instructional Goals
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

1e: Designing Coherent Instruction
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

1f: Assessing Student Learning
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

OVERALL DOMAIN ASSESSMENT
Unsatisfactory ___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Distinguished ___

COMMENDATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:
## 2 - THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

2c: Managing Classroom Procedures  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

2d: Managing Student Behavior  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

2e: Organizing Physical Space  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

### OVERALL DOMAIN ASSESSMENT

Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

### COMMENDATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

## 3 - INSTRUCTION

3a: Communicating Clearly and Accurately  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

3c: Engaging Students in Learning  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

3d: Providing Feedback to Students  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness  
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

### OVERALL DOMAIN ASSESSMENT

Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

### COMMENDATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:
4 - PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES
4a: Reflecting on Teaching
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

4b: Maintaining Accurate Records
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

4c: Communicating with Families
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

4d: Contributing to the School and District
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

4e: Growing and Developing Professionally
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

4f: Showing Professionalism
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

OVERALL DOMAIN ASSESSMENT
Unsatisfactory ___  Basic ___  Proficient ___  Distinguished ___

COMMENDATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

5 – SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR ANY ASSESSMENT OF UNSATISFACTORY OR BASIC PERFORMANCE

6 - STUDENT PROGRESS
Discussion of academic growth of students based on a variety of measures. (Narrative Description)

7 – EVALUATION PHASE FOR NEXT YEAR:

8 – ANNUAL ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY (Comments should be made about the teacher’s attendance and punctuality providing commendation and recommendations where appropriate. Extended and justified long-term absences should not be considered as the basis for critical comments.)

Teacher Acknowledgment
I have reviewed this document and discussed the contents with the evaluator. My signature means that I have been advised of the contents of this evaluation and does not necessarily imply that I agree.

______________________________  ______________________
Teacher Signature  Evaluator Signature
Date:  Date:
REFLECTION DOCUMENT – ANNUAL PERFORMANCE

NAME: \hspace{2cm} SCHOOL:

Please pause to reflect on your performance in each of the following five areas over the past year and record your assessment. Your reflection should identify where you have been particularly pleased and where you would like to strengthen your performance. The length of the document is determined by the teacher but must adequately respond to the questions. Bring this and any other documents that support your personal assessment to your evaluation conference.

(1) DOMAIN 1 – PLANNING AND PREPARATION
(2) DOMAIN 2 – THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT
(3) DOMAIN 3 – INSTRUCTION
(4) DOMAIN 4 – PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES
(5) STUDENT PROGRESS

The following questions are suggested to aid you in your personal reflection document:

1. What goals did you set for yourself in each of the domains?
2. What have you done to reach these goals?
3. What results can you point to based on your own documentation?
4. What did you learn from this that will reflect itself in next year’s goals?
5. What specific results did you see in student achievement?
6. What do you think contributed most significantly to these results?
7. What activities did you participate in that involved school improvement and increased parental involvement?
8. What do you want to focus on most intensely next year relative to your own professional development?

NOT TO BE INCLUDED IN PERSONNEL FILE
Teacher _________________________         School _________________

Please check one of the following:
   _____ 1 year project     _____1.5 year project     _____ 2 year project

Directions: Questions 1 - 4 are to be completed by the teacher before the final reflections meeting with primary evaluator. The Evaluator’s Assessment of the Professional Growth Plan is to be written by the evaluator after the Final Reflection meeting with the teacher.

Teacher’s Reflection
1. As I reflect on this school year: Were the goals and objectives set forth in my Professional Growth Plan met? What evidence do I have? Be specific.

2. What obstacles, if any, did I need to overcome? What and who were helpful to me? Explain how. Be specific.

3. What impact did/will my plan have on student achievement and progress? Be specific.

4. As a result of this year’s Professional Growth Plan, I plan to work on the following goals and objectives next year: (only for year one and two of Professional Growth)

Evaluator’s Assessment of Professional Growth Project.

Evaluation Placement for following school year

_____________________________________ __________
Teacher’s signature Date

_____________________________________ __________
Evaluator’s signature Date
Appendix G

SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

(Developed as part of the School Growth Plan)

School: Date Submitted:

Focus Area(s):

Needs Assessment (Data Source/s):

Planned Activities:

Duration of Plan

Evaluation (List indicators of success)
### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS AREA:</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Presenter (if used)** ________________________________

**Person(s) Responsible for Activity** ________________________________

**Objectives/Outcomes** ________________________________

**Target Audience** ________________________________

**Number and Length of sessions** ________________________________

**Place** ________________________________ **Time** ________________________________

**Materials/resources** ________________________________

**Method of Evaluation** ________________________________

**Expected Results** ________________________________

**Follow up** ________________________________

**Recommendations** ________________________________

**Additional Comments:**

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Norwalk Public Schools Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development Plan

August, 2007 - Revision Adopted by the Board of Education
ANNUAL SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN EVALUATION

School ___________________________ Date Submitted ________________

FOCUS AREA ADDRESSED: __________________________________________

Describe completed activities.

Indicators of success:

What went well and what would you do differently?

Recommendations for future direction:
## Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSATISFACTORY</td>
<td>Teacher displays little understanding of the subject or structure of the discipline, or of content-related pedagogy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>Teacher’s content and pedagogical knowledge represents basic understanding but does not extend to connections with other disciplines or to possible student misconceptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFICIENT</td>
<td>Teacher demonstrates solid understanding of the content and its prerequisite relationships and connections with other disciplines. Teacher’s instructional practices reflect current pedagogical knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTINGUISHED</td>
<td>Teacher’s knowledge of content &amp; pedagogy is extensive, showing evidence of a continuing search for improved practice. Teacher actively builds on knowledge of prerequisites and misconceptions when describing instruction or seeking causes for student misunderstanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSATISFACTORY</td>
<td>Teacher makes little or no attempt to acquire knowledge of students’ backgrounds, skills, or interests, and does not use such information in planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>Teacher demonstrates partial knowledge of students’ backgrounds, skills and interests, and attempts to use this knowledge in planning for the class as a whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFICIENT</td>
<td>Teacher demonstrates thorough knowledge of students’ backgrounds, skills, and interests, and uses this knowledge to plan for groups of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTINGUISHED</td>
<td>Teacher demonstrates thorough knowledge of students’ backgrounds, skills, and interests, and uses this knowledge to plan for individual student learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1c: Selecting Instructional Goals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSATISFACTORY</td>
<td>Teacher’s goals represent trivial learning, are unsuitable for students, or are stated only as instructional activities, and they do not permit viable methods of assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>Teacher’s goals are of moderate value or suitability for students in the class, consisting of a combination of goals and activities, some of which permit viable methods of assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFICIENT</td>
<td>Teacher’s goals represent valuable learning and are suitable for most students in the class; they reflect opportunities for integration and permit viable methods of assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTINGUISHED</td>
<td>Teacher’s goals reflect high-level learning relating to curriculum frameworks and standards; they are adapted, where necessary, to the needs of individual students, and permit viable methods of assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSATISFACTORY</td>
<td>Teacher is unaware of school or district resources available either for teaching or for students how need them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>Teacher displays limited knowledge of school or district resources available either for teaching or for students who need them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFICIENT</td>
<td>Teacher is fully aware of school and district resources available for teaching, and knows how to gain access to school and district resources for students who need them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTINGUISHED</td>
<td>Teacher seeks out resources for teaching in professional organizations and in the community, and is aware of resources available for students who need them, in the school, the district and the larger community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNSATISFACTORY</strong></td>
<td><strong>BASIC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</td>
<td>Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are negative or inappropriate and characterized by sarcasm, put-downs, or conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning</td>
<td>The classroom does not represent a culture for learning and is characterized by low teacher commitment to the subject, low expectations for student achievement, and little student pride in work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Domain 3: Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3a: Communication Clearly and Accurately</strong></td>
<td><strong>UNSATISFACTORY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s oral and written communication contains errors or is unclear or inappropriate to students.</td>
<td>Teacher’s oral and written communication contains no errors, but may not be completely appropriate or may require further explanations to avoid confusion.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3b: Using Questions and Discussion Techniques</strong></td>
<td>Teacher makes poor use of questioning and discussion techniques, with low-level questions, limited student participation, and little true discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3c: Engaging Students in Learning</strong></td>
<td>Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning, as a result of inappropriate activities or materials, poor representations of content, or lack of lesson structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3d: Providing Feedback to Students</strong></td>
<td>Teacher feedback to students is of poor quality and is not given in a timely manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness</strong></td>
<td>Teacher adheres to the instruction plan in spite of evident of poor student understanding or of student’s lack of interest, and fails to respond to students’ questions; teacher assumes no responsibility for students’ failure to understand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UNSATISFACTORY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a: Reflecting on Teaching</td>
<td>Teacher does not reflect accurately on the lesson or propose ideas as to how it might be improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b: Maintaining Accurate Records</td>
<td>Teacher has no system for maintaining accurate records, resulting in errors and confusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c: Communicating with Families</td>
<td>Teacher provides little or no information to families and makes no attempt to engage them in the instructional program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4d: Contributing to the School and District</td>
<td>Teacher’s relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving, and teacher avoids being involved in school and district projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4e: Growing and Developing Professionally</td>
<td>Teacher does not participate in professional development activities, even when such activities are clearly needed for the development of teaching skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4f: Showing Professionalism</td>
<td>Teacher’s sense of professionalism is low, and teacher contributes to practices that are self-serving or harmful to students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>