

NHPS Teacher Evaluation and Development Process Teachers and Administrators Guide

Context: New Haven School Change

New Haven Public Schools have been making steady strides in student learning, but as a system we must grow from incremental to exponential gains to meet the needs of all of our children, in all of our schools and classrooms. The system has established dramatic performance goals: eliminating the gap in performance between student in New Haven and students in the rest of the state, cutting the drop-out rate in half, and ensuring that every graduating student can be successful in college.

In order to accomplish this transformation, we need to transform the way we work as a school system. Students must learn through meaningful and coherent experiences in individual classrooms, among different classrooms, and in the rest of their lives. Schools must consistently be centers for learning, where teams of adults take collective responsibility for students, working separately and together to move students from where ever they start to the highest levels of learning, collaborating without fault. And the district and schools must act to support development, innovation, and adaptation, both by schools and by individuals.

The district is pursuing three strategies toward this vision. We are working to create a portfolio of schools, where each school will be organized and supported on its own unique path to success. We are connecting with the community, aligning the work of the district and schools as closely as possible with the other adults who work on behalf of students, including parents and community organizations. And finally, we are focused on talent, ensuring that adults in the system are managed as professionals to encourage collaboration, empowerment, and responsibility for outcomes. The materials that follow are a component of this talent work, alongside parallel evaluation and development of principals and other staff.

Sections Included in This Guide

- Introduction to Teacher Evaluation and Development in NHPS
- Key Elements of NHPS Teacher Evaluation and Development Process
- How is the teacher evaluation and development system different than what NHPS had in the past?
- What does the process look like over the course of a year?
- Measuring Growth in Student Learning
- How will the final teacher ratings to be determined?
- What do the teacher ratings mean? What happens after a teacher receives a rating?
- What is the role of the 3rd party Validator?

Introduction to Teacher Evaluation and Development Process in NHPS

In October 2009, New Haven Public Schools (NHPS) and the New Haven Federation of Teachers (NHFT) agreed to provide recommendations to the Board of Education on the teacher evaluation process, including how to use student learning growth in the evaluation of teachers. This work was guided by the core motivation of recognizing the professionalism of teaching, including the importance of performance based professional evaluation, and respect for professional voice in the school and district decision-making.

The resulting Teacher Evaluation and Development Process re-crafts evaluation and development to enable deep individualized development for teachers, ensuring that development is aligned to student learning goals, enabling job embedded and professional development and coaching for all teachers, and providing for consequential recognition of both outstanding and poor performance. The Teacher Evaluation and Development Process endeavors to shift the national paradigm of thinking on teacher evaluation to one in which both administrators and teachers approach individual and team-based development as the highest priority to achieve student learning goals.

Key Elements in the NHPS Teacher Evaluation and Development Process:

Evaluation and Development Conferences

The centerpiece of the evaluation and development system are regular, substantive and collegial discussions between a teacher and that teacher's Instructional Manager. The goal of these evaluation and development conferences is to provide comprehensive and constructive feedback to each teacher, including all the elements of teacher evaluation, and to set a defined plan of development opportunities for the teacher. The conferences will be the anchor of the rest of the evaluation and development process, and the foundation of the professional relationship between teacher and Instructional Manager.

Instructional Managers

To ensure consistency in the Teacher Evaluation and Development Process, each teacher should have a single Instructional Manager who is accountable for his or her evaluation and development. The manager, at his or her discretion, will be able to bring other administrators into the process to gather as complete and accurate a set of information as possible and to provide a full range of support.

Shift from Formal to Informal Frequent Observations

Rather than the former emphasis on formal observations, instructional managers will shift toward more frequent informal observations called instructional

rounds. Teachers may request a formal classroom observation if they prefer, though that would not preclude managers from making additional instructional rounds. Observations also are not limited to classroom observations, but include diagnostic and planning sessions, and other professional interactions that contribute to learning and the school community.

Domains of Evaluation and Development for Teachers

In order to ensure the most accurate and complete understanding of each teacher's performance, multiple domains of professional work are included. These domains include: student learning; domains of instructional practice; and professional values. Each of these is described in further detail in the following sections, as well as in the detailed performance continuums.

Student Learning: The first element of teacher evaluation and development is demonstrated impact on student learning. Importantly, all elements of student learning included in teacher evaluation and development will emphasize growth – that is, the advancement of learning relative to peers with a similar academic history. This is important because it enables some control for environmental factors, so that like students are compared to each other, and because it better reflects the actual contributions of individual teachers over the course of the year

Domains of Instructional Practice: Instruction should be purposeful, supportive of student learning, and meaningful. To that end, the Teacher Evaluation and Development Process will include evaluation of teachers in the areas of planning and preparation, classroom practice, and reflection and use of data, assessed through formal and informal classroom observations, and collegial diagnostic sessions such as data teams.

Professional Values: The Professional Values Framework measures seven key competencies which will be measured primarily by observations of different kinds. These competencies include: collaboration and collegiality, self-improvement, reliability, high expectations, respect, responsiveness and outreach, and professionalism and judgment.

How is the teacher evaluation and development system different than what NHPS had in the past?

- All teachers will be evaluated every year. There are no cycles in the new system.
- All teachers will be assigned one Instructional Manager (IM) who is responsible for the evaluation and development of the teacher. The IM may be the Principal, Assistant Principal, or other administrative leadership

- The new evaluation and development system will have three components:
 - 1) Growth in student learning, measured *both* by growth measures on standardized test scores where appropriate, and by academic goals set by teachers in collaboration with their Instructional Manager.
 - 2) Teacher instructional practice in the domains of planning and preparation, classroom practice, and reflection; and
 - 3) Teacher professional values addressing a set of characteristics including professionalism, collegiality, and high expectations for student learning.
- At the end of each year, all teachers will be assigned a rating that indicates their level of performance on a five-point scale based on the three above mentioned components: 5) Exemplary, 4) Strong, 3) Effective, 2) Developing, 1) Needs Improvement

<p>What does the process look like over the course of a year?</p>
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The evaluation and development process will have several important components that occur throughout the year.

- 1) All teachers will have at least 3 conferences per year: a goal-setting conference, a mid-year conference, and an end-of-year conference (see below for description).
- 2) New teachers or teachers in need of improvement will have at least one additional mid-year conference, for a minimum of four conferences per year.
- 3) Teachers will be observed regularly in the normal course of professional interactions in the school. Minimally, for each mid-year and end-of-year conference, at least one full class observation or three instructional rounds should occur. Teachers who are identified as likely to receive a “needs improvement” rating will have three additional observations conducted jointly with a 3rd party validator; exemplary teachers have two additional observations conducted jointly with the validator. In addition, the instructional manager may observe and/or participate in planning meetings and other professional responsibilities.
- 4) In the course of normal professional interactions, including instructional rounds, IM’s will provide feedback through whatever mechanism they find most convenient, including verbal, written, or email. Feedback should include observation of practice and, if appropriate, a suggestion for improvement. If a teacher is likely to be a 1 or a 2, then a significant portion

of the feedback should be in writing, available for review at the midyear or end-of-year conference.

Goal Setting Conference:

- Ideally in September, and at least by Oct. 31st, the IM will meet with every teacher in their portfolio to set goals for the school year. This includes at least two goals for the growth in student learning, as measured by assessments or tests. The teacher and the Instructional Manager should agree to these goals jointly. Teachers and IMs will also develop areas of focus for their own teaching, drawing from the Instructional Practice and/or Professional Values frameworks. The pair will develop a teacher development plan for the year that discusses how, what, when, and who will provide development opportunities for the teacher.

Professional Interaction and Data Gathering:

- Throughout the year, IMs will regularly visit the classroom of every teacher and provide on-going situational feedback about what has been observed. That feedback should be based on the Instructional Practice and Professional Values Performance Continuums. The IM may also offer feedback based on document reviews and observations in various school settings, including data teams and other professional settings. Feedback will be given to teachers regularly by the IM, in whatever format is most convenient and conducive to the professional relationship.

Mid-year Conference:

- Ideally by the end of January, and at least by March 1st, a mid-year conference between the IM and teacher will occur. As discussed, some teachers will have more conferences, as needed.
- The conference discussion will be driven by the Teacher Conference Form. To encourage self-reflection, teachers are encouraged to complete the Teacher Evaluation and Development Conference Form as a reflection tool, and provide a copy to the IM at least 2 days before the conference. Similarly, the administrator is encouraged to provide a copy of their version of the form before the meeting.
- During the mid-year conference, the instructional manager and the teacher will review the student learning goals set in the early fall and discuss progress towards accomplishing these goals, for both students and teacher. The teacher and IM will discuss the teacher's instructional practice and professional values, based on the appropriate performance continuum. They may also reassess the teacher's area of professional focus and development plan, making adjustments as needed.

- During the mid-year conference, IM's should inform teachers of the range of ratings they are likely to receive, based on the current data and collegial conversations that have occurred prior to the mid-year conference.

Professional Interaction and Data Gathering:

- Again after the midyear conference, the IM's will continue to regularly visit the classroom of teacher's in their portfolio and provide on-going situational feedback about what has been observed. Data and feedback will also be collected through document reviews and observations of professional meetings and planning sessions.

End of Year Conference:

- Before the end of the school year, an End of Year conference between the IM and the teacher will occur. In this conference, the IM and the teacher will review the final student learning results for students in the teacher's class(es), and the teacher's summative level of performance based on the Student Growth Outcomes, Instructional Practice, and Professional Values.
- Again, teachers are encouraged to self-assess and provide copies to the manager, and the IM is encouraged to provide copies of their final feedback to the teacher in advance of the meeting.
- Based on multiple sources of data, collegial conferences, observations of teacher practice and professional values, student achievement data, and documents reviews, the IM will give the teacher a final summative rating for the year using the *Teacher Evaluation and Development Conference Form*.
- In cases where the IM requires standardized test data to complete the evaluation of a teacher's performance (e.g. CMT scores, CAPT scores), then the end of year rating will be considered tentative pending the growth scores of the standardized tests. A final summative rating would be confirmed in the goal setting conference the next year.

Measuring Growth in Student Learning

The first element of teacher evaluation and development is demonstrated impact on student learning. Importantly, all elements of student learning included in teacher evaluation and development will emphasize growth – that is, the advancement of learning relative to peers. This is important because it better reflects both the learning that occurred over the course of the year and the actual contributions of individual teachers.

Student learning growth is measured by the actual student progress relative to goals established at the beginning of the year by a teacher and the IM. At the goal setting conference each teacher, along with the IM, selects at least two student learning

measures and develops rigorous goals for each measure (see the Goal Setting Worksheet for examples). During the mid-year conference student learning measures and progress are reviewed and adjusted as appropriate. Growth level ratings are assigned at the end-of-year conference for each goal based on student learning progress. Teachers are responsible for bringing as much data as is feasible and appropriate to their goals to the mid-year and end-of-year conference.

Student learning measures can include both tested knowledge (state tests, district assessments) and demonstrated skills (e.g. student work/portfolios) and will vary depending on content area, grade, and teacher. Student performance on the CMT should be included as a student learning measure for teachers who teach CMT-assessed subjects in grades 4-8. A framework of relevant assessments by grade level and content area is included in the Goal Setting Worksheet.

The IM will assign a student learning growth rating based on review of the data and information discussed at the mid- and end-of-year conferences. Ratings should be assigned based on district-wide guidelines, specifically:

- Exemplary (Ex-5): Consistent (i.e. 2 out of 3 years) top growth for students in a teacher's class, relative to academic peers and across learning measures
- Strong (St-4): A preponderance of evidence points to above average learning growth, across years and measures
- Effective (Ef-3): A preponderance of evidence reflects average student learning growth, and/or mixed results over time and across assessments
- Developing (Dv-2): A preponderance of evidence points to below average student learning, across years and measures
- Needs Improvement (NI-1): Consistent (i.e. 2 out of 3 years) low growth for students in a teacher's class, relative to academic peers and across learning measures

How will the final teacher ratings to be determined?

Teachers in the NHPS are assessed based on an evaluation system that includes three evaluation components: student learning outcomes, instructional practice, and professional values. The ratings for the three evaluation components are synthesized into a final summative rating at the end of each year based on the matrix of performance provided below:

Student Learning Outcomes: Growth in student learning (i.e., growth on state, district, or other assessments) and attainment of academic goals that are rigorous and aligned to standards

Teacher Instructional Practice: Instructional Manager judgments of observed teacher performance in the domains of Planning and Preparation, Classroom Practice, and Reflection and Use of Data

Teacher Professional Values: Instructional Manager judgments of observed teacher behavior that address a set of characteristics including professionalism, collegiality and high expectations for students.

Assessment of Teacher Performance (Summative) Matrix

		Student Learning Growth				
		1	2	3	4	5
Instructional Practice and Professional Values	1	1	1	2	3*	3*
	2	1	2	2	3	4*
	3	1	2	3	4	5
	4	2*	3	4	4	5
	5	3*	3*	4	5	5

Note: Instructional Practices will make up 80 percent of the combined Instructional Practices and Professional Values rating. Professional Value will account for 20 percent.

*Ratings with this degree of mismatch should be the subject of focused policy review, outside the context of the specific teacher’s evaluation, to determine why such a mismatch is occurring and what, if anything, needs to be corrected. The individual ratings themselves will also be reviewed to ensure that the given rating in these situations is fair and accurate based on the preponderance of evidence shared by the Instructional Manager and teacher. Individual ratings may be adjusted for unfairness or inconsistency.

What do the teacher ratings mean? What happens after a teacher receives a rating?

Teachers receiving an Exemplary (5) rating:

- Teachers receiving a final summative rating of a five are considered to be models of exemplary teaching, and should be sources of inspiration and replication in the district. These teachers are eligible for teacher leadership positions, including modeling and sharing of best practices, supporting other teachers, and leading professional learning communities
- Teachers on track to receive an “exemplary” rating must be notified by **October 31st** and will be observed twice by an external 3rd party ex-teacher as part of the

validation process to ensure fairness and accuracy of the Instructional Manager's judgment

Teachers receiving a Strong (4) or Effective (3) rating:

- In collaboration with their IM, teachers will develop a Professional Development Plan with the intent of developing skills that improve those teacher practices to the point that they reach the highest level of the rating scale (a 5 rating)

Teachers receiving a Developing (2) rating:

- Should receive targeted and focused development opportunities, designed to ensure they reach the effective stage as quickly as possible.
- Although a developing rating may be entirely appropriate at points in a teacher's career, including as a new teacher or working with a substantially new grade level, teachers should not remain developing indefinitely. At the discretion of the IM, a tenured teacher rated developing for two years can be treated as a needs improvement (1) in the third year

Teachers receiving a Needs Improvement (1) rating:

- Will receive immediate and intense development opportunities, including a written Intensive Plan for Improvement and frequent support sessions. The goal of that development is to improve the practice of the teacher and the learning of students in their class.
- Should be notified of the likelihood they will be rated needs improvement by the end of October. If teachers do not improve sufficiently after that notification, even with intense development and support opportunities, they will be subject to sanctions at the end of that school year, including termination.
- Will be observed by an external ex-teacher, a 3rd Party Validator, as part of the validation process to ensure fairness and accuracy of the instructional manager's judgment. Teachers in need of improvement will have three additional observations conducted jointly with the validator. The validator will also assess the plan of improvement to be sure it is reasonable and sufficient.

What is the role of the 3rd party Validator?

To ensure the fairness and accuracy of the IM's judgment, a 3rd party Validator will visit the classrooms of teachers rated as Needs Improvement or Exemplary and observe the teacher with the IM on several occasions, both formally and informally.

- Validators are used as a norming mechanism to validate Instructional Manager judgments for teachers rated as needs improvement or as exemplary

- Teachers rated needs improvement will receive 3 additional observations for teachers by a Validator. Teachers rated Exemplary will receive 2 additional observations
- Validators will be former teachers who have demonstrated effectiveness in the classroom and are not currently affiliated with the district
- The NHPS and NHFT will issue a joint contract to hire Validators. Validators will be selected by the contractor in consultation with the district and the union, pending funding
- If the IM and 3rd party Validator disagree on the teacher rating, the appeal for judgment will be determined by the Assistant Superintendent in collaboration with the President of the NHFT