

**SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

**TEACHER EVALUATION
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLAN**

**Our Overall Plan Is To Grow As Professionals
And Improve Student Learning**

**Approved by the Southington Board of Education June, 2001
In compliance with the Connecticut State Board of Education Guidelines
Adopted May, 1999
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Committee of the Southington Public Schools acknowledges the outstanding work of the Newington Public Schools in developing a comprehensive teacher evaluation plan as prescribed by the Connecticut State Department of Education. The general assistance provided by the Newington Public Schools greatly enhanced and eased the work of the committee. We are indebted to them.

MISSION STATEMENT

**SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

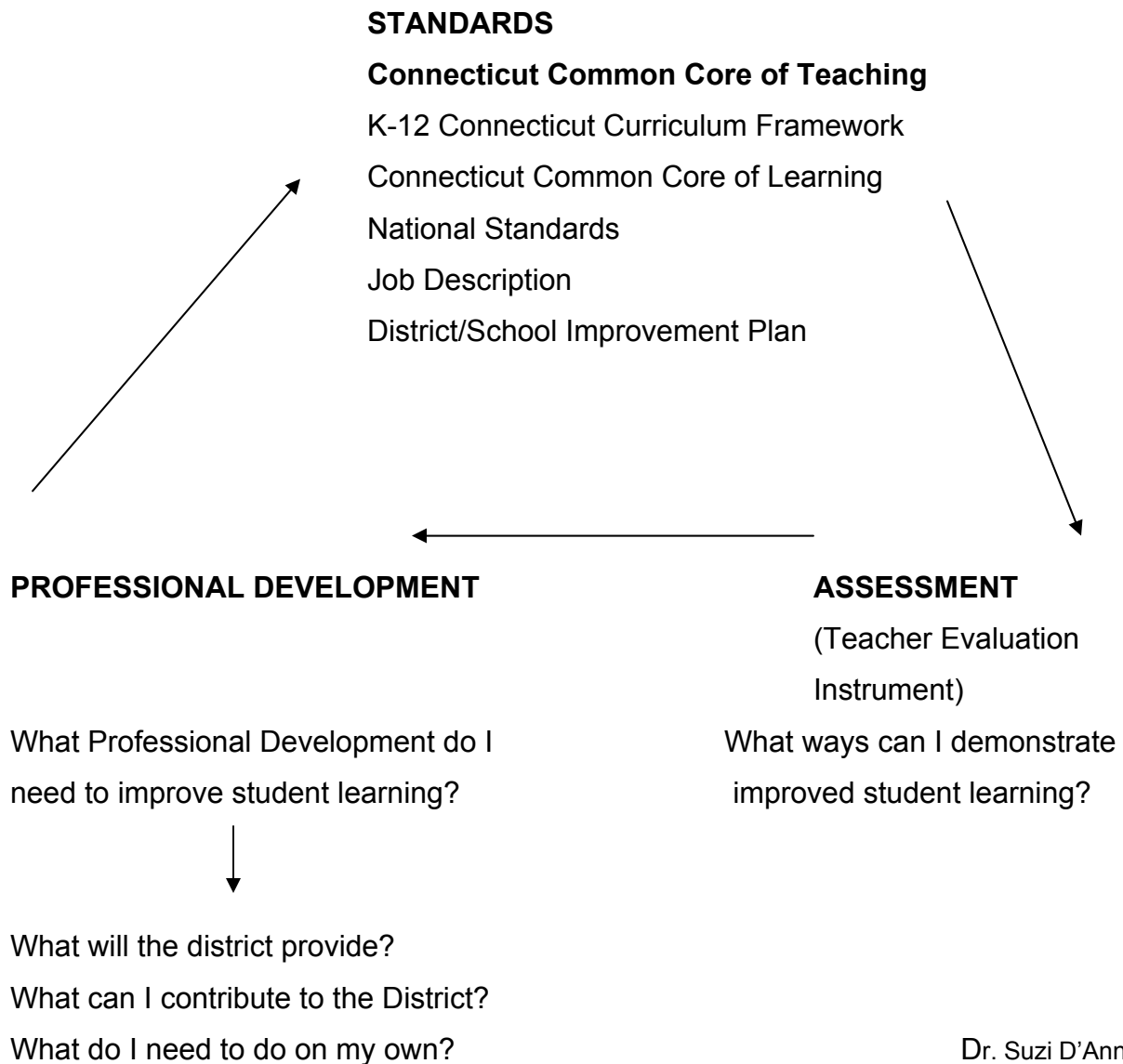
MISSION STATEMENT

The Southington Public Schools, through a home, school and community partnership, are committed to providing all students with multiple opportunities to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally as well as to become contributing members of society who appreciate the value of lifelong learning in a rapidly changing world.

TEACHER EVALUATION/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

LOOK TO THE END, BEFORE YOU BEGIN... What do I need to know and be able to do to improve student learning?

CONCEPTS AND SKILLS BASED ON



Dr. Suzi D'Annolfo

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

*To be a passionate teacher is to be someone in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people (i.e. all learners) who come into class each day – or captivated by all of these. A passionate teacher is a teacher who breaks out of the isolation of the classroom, who refuses to submit to apathy or cynicism... Only when teachers bring their passions about learning and about life into their daily work can they dispel the fog of passive compliance or active disinterest that surrounds so many students. (Robert L. Fried, *The Passionate Teacher*).*

Southington's Teacher Evaluation Professional Growth Plan is clearly focused on improving teaching and learning. It connects teacher evaluation, professional growth, curriculum development and student assessment in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust through purposeful goal setting, collegial discussions, feedback, sharing best practices, and reflection focused on improving student learning.

Connecticut's Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development recognize that student learning improves throughout the year when educators work collaboratively to examine the effect of teaching practices on student work. Through a shared partnership between staff members and evaluators, the development of goals is viewed as a cooperative activity with constant focus on the premise that improved competency in instruction increases student achievement and enhances the learning environment. By reflecting on student work and student learning issues, making curricular and instructional adjustments as appropriate, and assessing the impact that teaching practices have on student learning, educators build a trusting professional learning community in which they share knowledge and best practices in order to improve student learning.

Professional growth further supports educators' ongoing and systematic study of student learning issues. In that way teacher evaluation and professional growth

interconnect, support the learning process and focus on student achievement and school-based accountability.

Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development adopted by the State Board of Education in May, 1999 replace those adopted on December 7, 1993. The new guidelines are designed to build on and strengthen Connecticut's unwavering commitment to equity and excellence in education.

Both the staff member and the evaluator are responsible to understand thoroughly Southington's Teacher Evaluation Professional Growth Plan and the three Connecticut State Department of Education publications that frame the contents of the new guidelines:

1. **Connecticut's Common Core of Learning (CCL)**, which clearly establishes higher expectations of learning for all of Connecticut's children; (Appendix C).
2. **Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT)**, which **defines effective teaching practice** throughout the career continuum of teachers from pre-service, through induction, as well as for the evaluation and continued professional development of experienced teachers. **The CCT replaces the 15 Connecticut Teaching Competencies (CCI) as Connecticut's definition of effective teaching practice and is designed in three strands:**

STRAND I: Teachers have **KNOWLEDGE** of students, content, and pedagogy.

STRAND II: Teachers **APPLY** this knowledge by planning, instructing, assessing and adjusting (this strand incorporates the original CCI – Connecticut Competency Indicators).

STRAND III: Teachers **DEMONSTRATE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY** through professional and ethical practice, reflection, continuous learning, leadership and collaboration.

3. **The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards**, which establishes student content and performance standards across all disciplines by grade span, e.g., K through 4, 5 through 8, 9 through 12. This framework is available online at www.state.ct.us/sde and in all schools.

Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development

KEY ELEMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. A clearly written statement of the purpose(s), procedures, responsibilities, time lines and resources needed for implementation of the plan.
2. Evidence of teacher involvement in the design, implementation and evaluation of the plan.
3. Written district goals and objectives for students and related goals for teacher evaluation and professional development.
4. Provision for a process for the gathering and analyzing of data to inform teaching and learning.
5. Provision for presentation of documentation by teachers to support their self-evaluation.
6. Provision for a process to provide feedback that is clear, specific and constructive. Feedback should be timely and used at regular intervals to assess progress on district goals and objectives for students.
7. Provision for a process to provide choices for individuals to grow professionally that is differentiated to address different grade configurations, teacher experience(s) and the specific demands of the content field.
8. Clear procedures for the documentation of professional development through CEUs which are linked to the goals of the individual's and district's professional development plan.
9. A process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on objectives, the evaluation period, feedback or the professional development plan.
10. Specifications of the length of the evaluation period, which may vary for employees with different levels of experience and expertise.
11. Clear and specific steps for placing teachers in intensive supervision and/or for removing a teacher (dismissal). These steps must be designed to meet

the due process rights of teachers in cases of continued intensive supervision or dismissal.

- The intensive supervision phase should include sufficient opportunities for teachers to obtain assistance from peers and administrators and/or participate in special training that is purposefully designed to build the teacher's capacity to meet district standards.
- A district may opt to refer a teacher who fails to meet the district's minimal standards for teacher performance to an outside agency, such as a regional educational service center, college or university, or a CSDE resource bank of trained assessors qualified to provide assistance in improving teaching.
- Based on an agreed-upon timetable, sufficient time must be allocated to enable the teacher an opportunity to improve. Consequences of the teacher's performance must be clearly articulated and all steps taken for either the continuance or dismissal of the teacher must be well documented.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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Southington's ultimate goal of the teacher evaluation and professional growth process is to create collaboratively a culture and learning climate in which all educators become reflective practitioners in order to improve student learning.

This is based on the knowledge that:

- Student learning is directly affected by teacher competence.
- Teacher competence is affected positively by the integration of teacher evaluation and professional growth.
- Teachers, like students, must be continual learners.
- The gaps between expectations for student performance and actual student performance should guide the content of professional growth.
- Effective teachers improve teaching competencies throughout their careers by constantly questioning and analyzing the effectiveness of their methods and searching out new approaches to add to their repertoire.
- Effective teachers employ a wide variety of teaching and assessment methods and adapt them to the abilities and learning styles of pupils, the classroom setting, and the goals of the lesson.

The Southington Teacher Evaluation/Professional Growth Committee used the following guidelines to develop this document in order to reflect a shared sense of trust, purpose and responsibility between the teacher (staff member) and evaluator:

- Student learning will improve through the regular collection, analysis, and interpretation of student work and subsequent professional growth and adjustments to instruction;
- Continuous improvement must be fostered through a teacher evaluation and professional growth plan that is responsive to educators' different stages of growth and teaching experiences;
- Adequate time should be provided for educators to work collaboratively;
- Teaching, learning, and educational leadership will improve through a research-based professional growth program that devotes adequate

time to learning new skills and progressing through the stages of professional growth; and

- Educators will be supported and acknowledged for their growth, improvement, and contributions.

The purposes of our plan are:

1. To improve student learning.
2. To provide a teacher evaluation/professional growth document that recognizes the continuum in professional growth and teacher performance and provides support for both individual and collaborative evaluation and professional growth.
3. To provide an opportunity for the staff member and evaluator to analyze collaboratively the staff member's strengths and needs as they relate to the teaching/learning process and to use this knowledge, as a reflective practitioner, to develop plans for continuous professional growth.
4. To provide a means for the evaluator to determine the effectiveness of teacher performance. This includes making decisions and recommendations concerning continued employment, tenure, and granting of increment/salary increases, and responding on behalf of the school system to other personnel-related responsibilities.

PROCEDURES

PROCEDURES

The new **Connecticut Common Core of Teaching** serves as the definition of foundational skills and competencies for all Connecticut Teachers. The Southington Teacher Evaluation Professional Growth Plan supports the State Department of Education's premise that teachers are on a continuum in their professional career. It recognizes the need to provide additional support for new teachers aligned with the BEST (Beginning Educator Support and Training) program as well as for those tenured teachers who need additional professional assistance. In addition, a separate Professional Assistance (Special and Intensive) Program is available to address serious issues in teaching and learning and other professional responsibilities. These are each explained in detail within this document.

THERE ARE TWO PHASES TO THE TEACHER EVALUATION PLAN:

1. Induction Phase for Non-Tenured Teachers (4 years)

- Beginning teachers are expected to demonstrate competence in the CCT and successfully complete the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) teaching portfolio.

2. Continuous Professional Growth Phase (Tenured Teachers)

- Throughout the **Continuous Professional Growth Phase**, **The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT)** establishes standards for the evaluation of teachers (according to the State Department of Education's Guidelines for Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development) and guides teachers in selecting appropriate professional development (as documented by continuing Education Units) to meet individual as well as local district goals.
- During the **Continuous Professional Growth Phase**, there will be classroom visits throughout the year but no required formal observation. Teachers in this phase will have a

multitude of opportunities from which to develop their objectives and professional growth plans.

- Within the **Continuous Professional Growth Phase** there is a structured support component. This serves the purpose of addressing concerns early on which, hopefully, can be collaboratively resolved by the staff member and evaluator within the Professional Growth Phase.
- Professional Development is to be utilized at all levels of the Evaluation Process. Each teacher is to be an active learner.

ALL STAFF MEMBERS WILL SET PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES, supported by professional growth plans, for the school year by mid-October. Before setting goals individually or with a team, or designing professional growth plans, **each staff member will review and reflect on the indicators found in the three strands of The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching and the Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards.**

STAFF MEMBER OBJECTIVES AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH MUST BE LINKED

Staff members have different evaluation and professional development needs. Therefore, this plan provides choices to staff members that allow them to meet those needs. A one-size-fits-all plan is not acceptable given the diversity and development of staff members from beginning teachers to national board awardees. Therefore, the staff member is responsible for developing objectives and a professional growth plan to support those objectives. The staff member and evaluator will work collaboratively to define and clarify support/resources necessary to facilitate the achievement of the staff member's objectives and professional growth plan to improve student learning.

CONNECTICUT'S COMMON CORE OF TEACHING serves as the definition of effective teaching practice. **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 higher levels. These standards reflect current research and thinking about the mission of schooling and the job of teaching.

- **The degree of expertise staff members exhibit in the application of these standards should increase, as they become more experienced.**

It is expected that Connecticut educators will seek opportunities for ongoing professional growth throughout their careers and continually evaluate their progress against these standards. Not all staff members will master the competencies at the same time or to the same degree; thus, **a differentiated approach is reflected in this plan.**

- The CCT includes (1) **foundational skills and competencies** that are common to all teachers from pre-kindergarten through grade 12; and (2) **discipline-based professional standards** that represent the knowledge, skills and competencies that are unique for teachers of elementary education, English/language arts, history/social studies, mathematics, music, physical education, science, special education, visual arts and world languages (see Appendix B). The BEST Program teaching portfolios replace the Connecticut Competency Instrument (CCI) for purposes of assessing beginning teachers for licensure. The BEST portfolios evaluate a broad range of teaching competencies identified in Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching.
- Adoption of the CCT as the foundation of Connecticut's Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development Guidelines means that **classroom observation is a necessary, but not sufficient, means to evaluate teaching and student learning**. Staff members will be expected to provide evidence of improved student learning through multiple sources of data about effective teaching and learning. This may include but not be limited to
 - Lesson logs.
 - Evidence of student work that reflects improved student learning.
 - Teachers' use of tests and other forms of assessment.
 - Alignment of teacher planning and instruction to state and local learning goals and standards.

- Staff member commentaries regarding the progress of their students over time.
- Documentation of professional responsibilities and activities outside of the classroom.
- Self-evaluation.
- Portfolio containing student work and evidence of improved student learning.
- **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OFFERINGS** will provide meaningful learning experiences enabling educators to raise continuously their expectations for their students' achievement and for their teaching. Thus, the central focus of all professional growth including those eligible for continuing education units must be to improve student learning.
- **EVERY STAFF MEMBER WILL HAVE AN ANNUAL EVALUATION CONFERENCE.** During the evaluation conference, the staff member will discuss the status of his/her objectives to date and will provide evidence of improved student learning. Identification of strengths and focused area(s) of growth or in need of improvement will be collaboratively discussed between the staff member and evaluator.

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In the event there are serious concerns about a staff member's performance, she/he will be placed in the two-tiered Professional Assistance Program (Special Assistance and Intensive Assistance).

Placement in this program is considered to be very serious. If appropriate staff member improvement does not take place, a staff member may be terminated.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. DISAGREEMENT WITH EVALUATION CONTENT

The assessment of performance is solely the responsibility of the evaluator. However, a teacher disagreeing with the evaluator's assessment may request reconsideration or modification of an evaluation document and may add

comments within a thirty (30) day period (See collective bargaining agreement Article XXX). In an attempt to settle disagreements, a teacher may have bargaining unit representation. In a like manner, the evaluator may request the input of another certified evaluator.

B. DISAGREEMENT OF EVALUATION PROCEDURE

A teacher who believes that the prescribed evaluation procedure has not been followed may appeal to the Superintendent or designee within twenty (20) working days. At such an appeal, the teacher has the right of representation by the bargaining unit. If the Superintendent or designee finds that the evaluation procedure has been violated, he/she will take corrective action to insure proper evaluation procedures are implemented.

C. DISAGREEMENT ON OBJECTIVES

If agreement cannot be reached on the collaboratively established objectives based on **The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching**, the teacher will select one and the evaluator will select one.

RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBILITIES

ALL EDUCATORS HAVE A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY:

- To grow professionally;
- To share their knowledge with one another through various methods of data collection and collaborative work;
- To become reflective practitioners; and
- To contribute in a positive manner to the culture and climate of the total school/program community.

In order for this to happen the staff member and evaluator must work collaboratively to:

- Establish rapport and promote an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect;
- Encourage openness of communication;
- Provide a conference setting conducive to privacy and concentration;
- Create a sense of shared commitment and responsibility for student performance, progress, and success.

DEFINITION OF STAFF MEMBER AND EVALUATOR:

- When the word “staff member” is used in this plan, it is consistent with the statutory definition meaning all certified persons below the rank of superintendent.
- The evaluation plan includes components for classroom teachers, instructional support staff and administrative staff.
- Evaluators include those principals, assistant principals, curriculum supervisors, department coordinators, and central office administrators who are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of other certified staff.
- Department chairpersons work in cooperation with evaluators who are charged with this evaluative responsibility.

In addition the staff member and evaluator have specific job-related responsibilities as delineated in the job descriptions (Appendix D).

STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:

The primary responsibility of the staff member shall be successful performance in meeting the foundation skills and competencies as delineated in **The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching** and Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards. The teacher must be knowledgeable about this evaluation criteria.

To improve student learning, the staff member will actively participate in the evaluation process by:

- Acknowledging the need for professional growth and self-improvement.
- Developing objectives and a professional growth plan that leads to more skillful teaching
- Engaging in reflection and self-evaluation
- Seeking assistance and advice whenever necessary.

EVALUATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

The primary responsibilities of the evaluator are the development, support, and assessment of all staff members for whom s/he is responsible under this evaluation plan. A secondary responsibility of the evaluator is to establish a collaborative relationship with the staff member.

To have a fair, equitable and credible evaluation and professional development plan, administrators will be trained to assess teachers reliably and fairly across schools and within/across disciplines.

To improve student learning, the evaluator will actively participate in the evaluation process by:

- Supporting the staff member's goals and professional growth plan consistent with the school district's mission, goals, and objectives.
- Having frequent contact with the staff member to discuss student progress and desired outcomes of the goals and professional growth plan.

- Making every effort to support the staff member's self-improvement and professional growth.

TRAINING COMPONENT

Evaluators will be trained in the facilitation of the new Teacher Evaluation Professional Growth Plan document through a series of workshops and seminars prior to the implementation of this plan. This will be part of the state-required 15 hours of training in the evaluation of teachers for the Superintendent of Schools and employees employed in positions requiring an intermediate administrator or supervisory certificate.

The training component for all staff members will take place prior to the implementation of the plan and address understanding of the elements of the plan, **The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching** and specific responsibilities required by the staff member and evaluator.

EVALUATION OF THE TEACHER EVALUATION PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLAN

The Staff Evaluation Committee, which is composed of elementary, middle, and high school teachers, building and central office administrators and a representative of the Southington Teachers Association is a standing committee charged with the responsibility of overseeing the implementation and evaluation of the Evaluation Plan. The committee will meet at least once yearly to consider modifications in the approved plan that are brought forward by teachers, administrators, and/or as a result of changes in state statutes or regulations. Every three years, at a minimum, the plan will be formally evaluated to assure that the plan is meeting its stated purposes, goals, and objectives. Input will be sought through a structured process from all personnel being evaluated under the plan. The staff evaluation committee will be responsible for modifications to the plan to assure that it meets its stated purposes and the professional development needs of all certified personnel of the Southington Public Schools.

CONNECTICUT COMMON CORE OF TEACHING

Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching: Foundational Skills and Competencies

I. Teachers have knowledge of:

A. Students

1. *Teachers understand how students learn and develop.*
2. *Teachers understand how students differ in their approaches to learning.*

B. 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.*

C. 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:

A. 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.*

B. Instructing

1. *Teachers establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a commitment to students and their success.*
2. *Teachers create instructional opportunities that support students' academic, social and personal development.*
3. *Teachers use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques, which foster individual and collaborative inquiry.*

4. *Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems, and demonstrate skills.*

C. Assessing and adjusting

1. *Teachers use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate.*

III. Teachers demonstrate professional responsibility through:

A. Professional and ethical practice

1. *Teachers conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Section 10-145d-40a of the Certification Regulations).*
2. *Teachers share responsibility for student achievement and well-being.*

B. 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.*

C. Leadership and Collaboration

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

CONNECTICUT COMMON CORE OF TEACHING

The following full text of **The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching** explains more fully what each standard means in terms of critical knowledge, skills and abilities. The more detailed description of these standards and indicators are intended to encourage professional discussions of effective teaching and learning.

The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching has been formatted so the teacher may use it as an instrument for self-appraisal and a catalyst for developing written performance objectives and professional growth to improve student learning.

CONNECTICUT'S COMMON CORE OF TEACHING

STRAND I

Teachers have knowledge of:

Students
Content
Pedagogy

STUDENTS

(Include children, adolescents and adults served by the public school system)

1. I understand how students learn and develop by:
 - becoming knowledgeable about the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to the normal progression and variations in students' physical, emotional, and cognitive development to construct learning opportunities that support students' development, acquisition of knowledge, and motivation.
 - learning about exceptionalities in learning – including learning differences, visual and perceptual differences, socio-emotional differences, special physical or mental challenges, and gifted and talented exceptionalities – and challenging students with exceptionality as well as seeking sources of support within the school.
2. I understand how students differ in their approaches to learning by:
 - being aware of how student learning is influenced by language, culture, heritage, family and community values and incorporating students' experiences and community resources into instruction.
 - learning about and utilizing strategies for building understanding, acceptance and a positive sense of community into the classroom.
 - becoming knowledgeable about language development, including the process of second language acquisition, and employing strategies to support the learning of students whose first language is not English.

CONTENT

3. I am proficient in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. I understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) they teach by:
 - becoming knowledgeable about the major principles and concepts of the subject to be taught and presenting appropriate lesson content
 - learning about and using computer and information technology as an integral part of teaching my discipline(s).
 - knowing and utilizing national and state standards within my discipline(s).
 - being aware of the evolving nature of subject matter knowledge and the need for keeping abreast of new ideas and understandings within my discipline(s), including the impact of technology and information sources on the nature of teaching, communications and the development of knowledge.
 - understanding that literacy skills and processes are applicable in all content areas and helping students develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions that enable students to construct meaning and make sense of the world through reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing.
 - understanding and using concepts and skills inherent in numeracy to enable my students to represent physical events, work with data, reason, communicate mathematically, and make connections within their respective content area in order to solve problems.

PEDAGOGY

5. I know how to design and deliver instruction by:
 - understanding that the specific content taught is part of and connected to a larger universe of knowledge represented in a K-12 curriculum.
 - recognizing the importance of focusing and sequencing curricular objectives to connect with students' previous and future learning and to prepare students to master state and local achievement goals.

- choosing when and how to expand beyond the articulated curriculum to meet student needs and to make connections among different subjects and among school, career and work.
6. I recognize the need to vary my instructional methods by:
- recognizing individual differences in approaches to learning and identifying how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment.
 - varying my role (e.g. instructor, facilitator, coach, and audience) in the instructional process in relation to the content and purposes of instruction.

CONNECTICUT'S COMMON CORE OF TEACHING

STRAND II

Teachers apply this knowledge by:

Planning
Instructing
Assessing and Adjusting

PLANNING

1. I plan instruction based upon knowledge of students, subject matter, the curriculum, (school and district goals, building instructional improvement plan,) and the community by:
 - designing instruction and assessment to achieve long- and short-term learning goals that are specific and measurable.
 - selecting appropriate materials – including a wide range of technological resources – to help students find information, interpret the quality of sources, and effectively synthesize and communicate information.
 - sequencing learning tasks into coherent units of instruction derived from the curriculum and incorporating hands-on, real-world experiences and community resources from which students can build an understanding of abstract concepts and knowledge.
 - anticipating common misperceptions, diverse levels of student interest and available resources, and making adjustments as appropriate.
2. I create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make subject matter meaningful to students by:
 - designing tasks that meet curricular goals, build upon students' prior learning, and advance the student toward important learning goals.
 - addressing various learning styles, incorporating multicultural content and fostering interdisciplinary connections.
 - making purposeful choices about whether student should work individually or collectively.

INSTRUCTING

3. I establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a deep commitment to students and their success by:
 - Ensuring that standards of behavior are explicit and applying them consistently over time with fitting consequences.
 - Maximizing the amount of time spent in instruction by effectively managing routines and transitions.
 - Organizing, allocating and managing resources of time, space, activities and attention to ensure high levels of student engagement and participation.
 - Establishing high expectations for achievement, promoting shared responsibility for learning, and nurturing the development of ethical and responsible behavior in students.
 - Demonstrating enthusiasm, self-confidence and caring about the well-being of students.
 - Structuring student interactions and academic discussions in a non-threatening, safe learning environment that supports varied learning and performance styles, student interests, and encourages intellectual risk-taking among learners.
 - Using understanding of individual and group motivation to foster students' independent thinking, perseverance and confidence as learners.
4. I create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social and personal development by:
 - Developing effective lessons by organizing instructional activities and materials to promote achievement of lesson objectives.
 - Employing techniques that address a variety of learning styles as well as incorporate a wide range of community and technology resources.
 - Promoting the development of critical and creative thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills and the deeper understanding of concepts.
 - Integrating into all curriculums and programs opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate ethical and responsible student behavior.
5. I use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques, which foster individual and collective inquiry by:

- Communicating clearly, using precise language and acceptable oral and written expressions that convey expectations for students.
 - Engaging students in purposeful discourse by using appropriate questioning strategies – i.e., knowing when to provide information, when to clarify an issue, when to model, when to lead and when to let students struggle with a difficulty.
6. I employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills by:
- Becoming familiar with principles and techniques associated with various instructional and assessment strategies, including how to use multiple representations and explanations of concepts.
 - Identifying strategies to create learning experiences that make subject matter meaningful for students, encouraging students to pursue their own inquiries and interests, and helping students make connections between school and career.

ASSESSING AND ADJUSTING

7. I use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate by:
- Monitoring student understanding of the lesson at appropriate points and adjusting teaching when necessary.
 - Reflecting upon and analyzing the process of teaching based on student learning or failure to learn, and modifying future plans and instructional approaches accordingly.
 - Sharing assessment criteria with students on a regular basis as well as guiding students to use these criteria for self-evaluation.
 - Collecting data over time by analyzing student work and determining whether or not instructional strategies promote desired students learning outcomes.
 - Using multiple sources of data (such as classroom observation, student work, teacher constructed assessment tasks, standardized test information, state examination student scores or released items, school records, etc.) to examine my students' progress in light of national, state and local performance standards.

CONNECTICUT'S COMMON CORE OF TEACHING

STRAND III

Teachers demonstrate professional responsibility through:

**Professional and Ethical Practice
Reflection and Continuous Learning
Leadership and Collaboration**

PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL PRACTICE

1. I conduct myself as a professional in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Section 10-145d-400a of the Certification Regulations).
2. I share responsibility for student achievement and well-being through means such as:
 - Working collaboratively with school administrators, colleagues and families to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.
 - Involving families of students in the education of their children by keeping them informed about their students' learning and seeking input to support and meet children's needs.
 - Identifying appropriate agencies in the larger community, businesses and professional organizations that can provide resources for students, classrooms or schools.
 - Individualizing home communication as needed.
 - Promoting dialogue with families through sharing information and active listening.

REFLECTION AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING

3. I continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of my choices and actions on students and the school community through means such as:

- Working with administrators and colleagues to explore student work and progress, to examine the effectiveness of instructional strategies, to identify school and program needs based on student data, and to ensure that the collective needs of the school are addressed.
4. I seek out opportunities to grow professionally through means such as:
- Sharing practices with professional colleagues within the school or district.
 - Enriching my knowledge about content, learners, pedagogy, technology and the U.S. public school system through the examination of professional literature, participation in professional organizations, attendance at professional development seminars or ongoing graduate-level course work.

LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

5. I serve as a leader in the school community through means such as:
- Working with colleagues to create a positive, collaborative school culture.
 - Working with colleagues and/or community leaders to secure community support for students and schools and actively promoting strategies that support the continuous improvement of student learning.
 - Working with colleagues in addressing other identified needs of the school and student body.
6. I demonstrate a commitment to my students and a passion for improving my profession through such means as:
- Bringing my enthusiasm about learning and about life into my daily work.
 - Showing a commitment to developing the minds and characters of my students.

INDUCTION PHASE

THE INDUCTION PHASE

The Induction Phase is designed to support, encourage, and assess beginning teachers who are participating in the BEST Program and all non-tenured certified staff members. This is a four (4) year phase with specific requirements for each year.

Newly hired staff possessing the Initial Educator Certificate and participating in the BEST Program are assigned to this phase while they complete the requirements of the BEST Program (usually two years).

Certified staff who have completed the BEST Program but who have not yet attained tenure are assigned to the Induction Phase for years three and four.

Newly hired staff who have previously acquired tenure in another district are assigned to the Induction Phase until they receive tenure in Southington.

New teachers will be provided support as outlined in the Southington New Teacher Induction Plan.

YEAR 1 INDUCTION PHASE

Staff considered as Year 1: first year teacher in Southington

TEACHERS COMPLETING BEST PROGRAM

- By October 15 – a conference between the teacher and the evaluator to collaboratively select a performance objective. (Form A)
- By October 30 – an informal observation with a post conference to reflect on the observation, discuss evidence of students' learning, and review the evaluation document. (Forms B & D)
- By February 15 – a minimum of two formal observations with pre and post conferences. (Forms C, D, and E)
- Reflection on the progress of performance objectives to be discussed at post conferences following formal observations.
- By March 1 – Annual Evaluation conference and report. (Form F)
- Between March 1 and end of school year – informal observation with post conference. (Forms B and D)

YEAR 2 INDUCTION PHASE

Staff Considered as Year 2: Second year as a teacher in Southington or teacher non-tenured in previous district.

TEACHERS COMPLETING BEST PROGRAM

- The completion of the BEST portfolio/program under the guidance of the Southington New Teacher Induction Plan.
- By October 15 – a conference between the teacher and the evaluator to collaboratively select a performance objective. (Form A)
- By October 31 – a conference between the teacher and the evaluator to develop a focus for each observation related to the BEST portfolio development.
- By February 15 – three formal observations including pre and post conferences with the focus on BEST portfolio requirements. (Forms C, D, and E)
 - Observation 1 – the planning component.
 - Observation 2 – the instructional component. (Teachers are encouraged to view and reflect on videotaped lesson.)
 - Observation 3 – the assessment component (as evidenced by student work).

TEACHERS NOT INVOLVED IN BEST PROGRAM

- By October 15 – a conference between teacher and evaluator to collaboratively select a performance objective. (Form A)
- By February 15 – three formal observation including pre and post conferences. (Forms C, D, and E)

ALL TEACHERS IN YEAR 2

- By March 1 – annual evaluation conference and report. (Form F)
- Between March 1 and end of school year – informal observation with post conference. (Forms B and D)

YEARS 3 AND 4 INDUCTION PHASE

Staff considered as Year 3: Third year as a teacher in Southington or first year in Southington but previously tenured in another public school district.

Staff considered as Year 4: Fourth year as a teacher in Southington and previously tenured in another public school district.

- By October 15 – a conference between the teacher and the evaluator to collaboratively select one performance objective related to the CCT and Connecticut’s Common Core of Learning. (See Appendix C)
- By October 30 – a minimum of one formal observation with pre and post conferences (Forms C, D and E)
- By Midyear– a reflection on status of performance objectives communicated to evaluator. (Either Form I or dialogue)
- By March 1 – a minimum of one formal observation with pre and post conferences. (Forms C, D, and E)
- By March 1 – Annual Evaluation conference and report. (Form F)
- Between March 1 and end of school year – informal observation with post conference. (Forms B and D)

INDUCTION PHASE TIMELINE

<u>October 15</u>	<u>October 30</u>	<u>Midyear</u>	<u>February 15</u>	<u>March 1</u>	<u>End of School</u>
<p>One collaboratively selected performance objective. (Years 1 and 2)</p> <p>(Form A)</p> <p>Two collaboratively selected performance objectives. (Years 3 and 4)</p>	<p>Informal observation with post conference. (Year 1)</p> <p>(Form B & D)</p> <p>Conference to develop focus for observations related to BEST portfolio development. (Year 2)</p> <p>Minimum of one formal observation completed with pre and post conferences. (Years 3 and 4)</p> <p>(Forms C, D, and E)</p>	<p>A reflection on status of performance objectives. (Years 3 and 4)</p> <p>(Form I) (Portfolio) (Dialogue)</p>	<p>Minimum of 2 formal observations completed with pre and post conferences. (Year 1)</p> <p>(Form C, D, and E)</p> <p>Completion of 3 formal observations with focus on BEST portfolio requirements. (Year 2 in BEST)</p> <p>(Forms C, D, and E)</p> <p>Minimum of 3 formal observations with pre and post conferences. (Year 2 – not in BEST)</p> <p>(Forms C, D, and E)</p>	<p>A minimum of one formal observation with pre and post conferences (Year 3 and 4)</p> <p>(Forms C, D, and E)</p> <p>Annual Evaluation Conference and report. (Years 1, 2, 3 and 4)</p> <p>(Form F)</p>	<p>Informal observation with post conference (Years 1, 2, 3 and 4)</p> <p>(Forms B & D)</p>

Coordinated Professional Development/Teacher Evaluation

Based on

Mandated Topics

District Goals

Building Goals

New initiatives (list)

Test Scores CMT/CAPT

New curriculum

Professional Development

Individual Day

Approved by Committee

Faculty Meetings

Before/After School/W/S

Approved Coursework

Collegial Group Learning

(Research based)

3 Full days

3(.5) days

-1 day Curriculum

-1 day Building

-1 day District

(Aug.)

To be shared at Faculty Meetings

-.5 Building

-.5 Building

-.5 (Open)

Student Learning

Teacher Evaluation

Portfolios

Sharing at Meetings

Offering Professional Development

Non Formal Evaluations

Visitation & Commentary

Teachers on Intensive

Assistance

Intervention Stage

Beyond Intervention

First and Second Year Teachers

Evaluation tied in with BEST

Evaluation & BEST Portfolio

**CONTINUOUS
PROFESSIONAL
GROWTH PHASE**

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PHASE (Tenured Teachers)

This phase is designed for certified staff with tenure who consistently demonstrate competence as described in the Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT). This phase recognizes that staff members are **at different levels of development in their careers and may need variable growth plans and support systems to improve student learning**. Therefore, the staff member has the option of working **individually** or on a **collaborative team** to develop objectives and a professional growth plan to support those objectives.

The Continuous Professional Growth Phase encourages teachers to take greater responsibility for their effectiveness and to become more self-reflective about their teaching practices and their impact on student learning. New, untried, and innovative ideas are encouraged in the Continuous Professional Growth Phase. **Growth occurs when all participants of the learning community (staff members and evaluators) contribute in a positive manner to life-long learning.**

- If we acknowledge that all students can learn at higher levels, then the school culture must reflect the belief that all educators are committed to growing professionally.
- If we want students to behave as workers, researchers, and problem solvers in order to become flexible and independent thinkers who can set realistic goals and make decisions that lead to achievement, then the school culture must provide the opportunity for educators to be learners. As learners we must work individually and collaboratively to develop the research and reflective skills that allow for decisions to be made that lead to the improvement of teaching and student learning.
- If we want students to work cooperatively and to assume responsibility for helping one another to achieve success and experience self-worth, then the school culture must provide opportunities for staff to work collaboratively to design and adjust professional practices to meet the needs of their students. Staff members may experience success and pride in their multi-dimensional role

of teacher, learner, and leader by monitoring student progress and designing curriculum, assessment, staff development and school improvement programs.

- If we want to acknowledge and celebrate student success at every level of a student's education, then the school culture must acknowledge and celebrate the professional growth and leadership of its staff at every milestone of an educator's career, thereby reinforcing and communicating the attitudes, attributes, skills and knowledge that are valued for all learners.

THE PROCESS

All staff members in the Continuous Professional Growth Phase will set an objective(s). The objective(s) is aligned with district, school or departmental goals with specific, measurable outcomes to improve student learning and referenced to a specific strand(s) of the CCT.

- Staff members may develop their objectives and professional growth plan to support those objectives either individually or collaboratively with a peer or team (Form A).
- A meeting will be set with the evaluator and the staff member to discuss goals and collaboratively establish further areas of support needed to achieve their objective(s) by October 15th.
- The process involved in working toward the accomplishment of these objectives should be viewed as valuable as the actual achievement of the objectives.
- The evaluator will make classroom visits throughout the year to get an authentic flavor of what is occurring on a day-to-day basis.
- The evaluator will provide feedback for the teacher's self-reflection.
- Feedback will be both verbal or brief comments made on the attached "Feedback Form" (Form G).
- By midyear and periodically throughout the school year, the teacher will provide a verbal or written status report of the objectives to the evaluator. (This will also provide an opportunity to discuss the staff member's progress of his/her professional growth plan.)
- All teachers will participate in the Annual Evaluation Conference with his/her evaluator.
- All teachers will have an Annual Evaluation Report which becomes part of the staff member's personnel file.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PHASE TIMELINE

(TENURED STAFF)

Sept. – Oct.

Self-assess and reflect using **The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching**, Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards, and district, school, and/or department/program goals, to plan yearly objectives.

By October 15th

Complete Performance Objective(s)/Professional Growth Plan and schedule a conference with evaluator to discuss objectives.

Focus on one or two objectives, which will demonstrate, improved student learning supported by professional growth.

FORM A

Oct. – May

Collect data throughout the year to show improved student learning for Annual Evaluation Conference

A midyear reflection on the status of performance objectives communicated to the evaluator – Form I, Portfolio, Dialogue.

Evaluator provides feedback on classroom visits or other work-related responsibilities.

By May 15th

Annual Evaluation Conference

- Complete #1, 2, 3, and 4 of Annual Evaluation Report prior to conference.
- Collaboratively facilitate conference by reporting on the status of objectives and providing evidence of improved student learning.

FORM F-1

**PERFORMANCE
OBJECTIVES/
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
PLAN**

DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES/ PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLAN

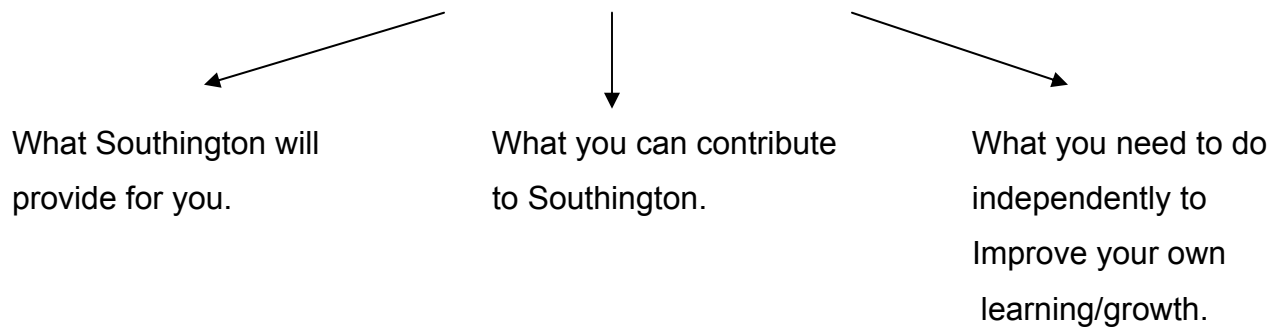
All staff members will set performance objective supported by a Professional Growth Plan for the school year by mid-October. Before setting goals individually or with a team, or designing professional development plans, each staff member should review the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching and Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards

The full text of The **Connecticut Common Core of Teaching** explains more fully what each standard means in terms of critical knowledge, skills and abilities. It has been formatted so teachers may use it as an **instrument for self-reflection and a catalyst for developing written performance objectives and professional growth to improve student learning**. The more detailed description of these standard and indicators are intended to encourage professional discussions of effective teaching to improve student learning.

1. Before developing objectives, the teacher should be well acquainted with:
 - District and school goals (including departmental and program goals)
 - **Connecticut Common Core of Teaching**
 - Connecticut Common Core of Learning (Appendix C)
 - Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility. (Appendix B)
2. When selecting objectives, it is important to focus on one or two comprehensive objectives rather than diluting the focus and attempting to achieve too many objectives at once.
3. Teachers should identify professional growth needs that will support the achievement of their performance objectives to improve student learning.

Growth occurs when teachers and evaluators work together to contribute to the culture and climate of our learning environment. **An effective professional development plan is a commitment by the teacher to grow professionally in order to improve student learning**. A professional development plan directly relates to the improvement of all learners.

Professional Growth is viewed as a three-dimensional approach.



After developing a professional development plan to support your objectives, the following essential questions should be reviewed for reflection:

1. Does the plan identify specific outcomes that can be measured?
2. Does the plan include a specific timetable of actions needed to achieve the objective and the target dates for accomplishments?
3. Is the plan realistic?
4. Is the plan challenging, promoting your growth as a professional?
5. Is the plan consistent with available and anticipated resources?
6. Will the plan improve student learning and strengthen professional growth?

Professional Growth may include, but is not limited to:

- Workshops
- Work-related coursework
- Committee work
- Workshop leader
- Research projects
- Study circles
- Special interest projects
- Working with a consultant
- Pilot a program
- Grade level or department project
- Planning and presenting a professional growth workshop/activity with a colleague
- Mentoring
- Independent study
- Action research within a classroom
- Weekly journal promoting self-reflection
- Self-analysis of a series of video taped lessons.
- Analysis of theme activities
- Submitting an article for publication
- Joint planning session with colleagues

4. When developing performance objectives and professional growth plan, staff members focus on the connection between student performance and staff member growth by addressing the following essential questions:

Objective	How will student learning improve as a result of my objective?
Indicators of Success	What data will I use as evidence to know/show that I have achieved my objective?
Plan of Action	What procedures will I implement to achieve my objectives? What professional growth activities are needed to support his objective?
Connections	How does my plan relate to district, school or departmental goals? How will I share the results of my learning with others?

**PROFESSIONAL
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM**

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Professional Assistance Program is intended to aid the tenured or non-tenured educator who is having difficulty consistently demonstrating competence as described in Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT). This program is composed of two levels: Special Assistance and Intensive Assistance. Staff members assigned to the Professional Assistance Program will work cooperatively with their evaluator in a collegial relationship to develop and implement an individualized remediation plan designed to assist the staff member in meeting competence. In general, a staff member will be placed in the first level – Special Assistance – to address area(s) of concern in his/her performance. The Superintendent and or designee may, however, immediately place a staff member in the second level – Intensive Assistance – to address serious concerns. The Professional Assistance Program will include sufficient opportunities for the staff member to obtain assistance from peers and the evaluator. The program may include participation in special training that is designed to build the staff member's competency. The staff member shall be advised by the evaluator to discuss placement in the Professional Assistance Program with a representative of the Southington Education Association (SEA). The staff member has a right to SEA representation in all subsequent meetings. Below is a description of Special and Intensive Assistance and the procedures to be followed for each.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Special Assistance:

1. The staff member will receive verbal and written notification when being assigned to Special Assistance.
2. The staff member will be advised to discuss placement in the Special Assistance program with a representative of the SEA.
3. Within fifteen (15) working days of the notification, the staff member and evaluator will meet and develop a personalized professional development plan, which could supercede goals and objectives that were previously established.
4. The staff member and the evaluator may select a peer coach, a department chairperson, an appropriate subject coordinator or other mutually agreed upon personnel. The primary role of these staff members is to assist the teacher. They do not participate in the staff members evaluation.
5. The personalized professional development plan will include:
 - Definition of the area(s) of concern
 - Identification of what must be accomplished
 - Strategies for resolution of the problem and the level and type of assistance to be provided.
 - Indicators of success
 - A timeline for meeting minimum performance expectation not to exceed 60 school days.
6. All feedback from the evaluator to the staff member throughout Special Assistance will include a written summary.
7. Upon review of progress toward correcting the problem the evaluator will make the following recommendations:
 - Problem is resolved and the staff member is removed from Special Assistance and returned to either the Induction Phase or the Continuous Professional Growth Phase as determined by tenure status.

OR

- Staff member is making progress but has not yet addressed all concerns. The staff member will continue in Special Assistance for a final designated time period not to exceed 60 school days.

OR

- Problem is not resolved and the staff member is moved to Intensive Assistance.

INTENSIVE ASSISTANCE

Intensive Assistance:

1. When concerns are not alleviated through Special Assistance, the evaluator will confer with the Associate Superintendent, who will follow up the conference with a written statement of the specific concern(s) the evaluator has about the staff member's performance, and what has been done to date under the assistance process. After discussion and review by the Associate Superintendent, an Intensive Assistance Program will be initiated.
2. Intensive Assistance begins with a notice to the staff member that a meeting will be held with the evaluator to discuss the staff member's performance. The evaluator involved with the staff member will attend this meeting. It will be suggested that the staff member invite a representative of the Southington Education Association to attend as well. Other appropriate personnel may be invited. The purpose of this meeting is to establish that the concerns previously expressed by the immediate evaluator have not been successfully addressed. The concerns may be, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Inability to implement effectively one or more of the skills defined in the Common Core of Teaching
 - Violations of the Teachers' Code of Responsibility
3. A formal written plan of action will be developed which will include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - A clear statement(s) of what has to be done in order to alleviate the concern(s)
 - A time period, usually three to four months, with a regular schedule of observations at a designated frequency
 - Periodic meetings scheduled by the evaluator to review progress
4. The first meeting date to develop the plan of action will be within 10 school days following the initiation of the Intensive Assistance Program.
5. Although help will be available from the evaluator involved with the staff member, responsibility for the success of the plan is placed on the staff member.

6. The staff member must show clear evidence of an intensive effort to improve performance in the area(s) of concern.
7. Copies of all observation reports and conference summaries will be forwarded to the Associate Superintendent's office.
8. All observation reports, conference summaries, and written summaries of progress review meetings will be examined to determine whether there is improved performance. One of the following recommendations by the Associate Superintendent and the evaluator will be made to the Superintendent.
 - If improved performance has occurred, the staff member should be taken off Intensive Assistance and returned to either the Induction Phase or the Continuous Professional Growth Phase of evaluation.
 - If improved performance has not occurred, the staff member will be informed that his/her performance continues to be unsatisfactory and the process of termination will begin.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. DISAGREEMENT WITH EVALUATION CONTENT

The assessment of performance is solely the responsibility of the evaluator. However, a teacher disagreeing with the evaluator's assessment may request reconsideration or modification of an evaluation document and may add comments within a thirty (30) day period. (See collective bargaining agreement Article XXX). In an attempt to settle disagreements, a teacher may have bargaining unit representation. In a like manner, the evaluator may request the input of another certified evaluator.

B. DISAGREEMENT OF EVALUATION PROCEDURE

A teacher who believes that the prescribed evaluation procedures has not been followed may appeal to the Superintendent or designee within twenty (20) working days. At such an appeal, the teacher has the right of representation by the bargaining unit. If the Superintendent or designee finds that the evaluation procedure has been violated, he/she will take corrective action to insure proper evaluation procedures are implemented.

C. DISAGREEMENT ON OBJECTIVES

If agreement cannot be reached on the collaboratively established objectives based on the **Connecticut Common Core of Teaching**, the teacher will select one and the evaluator will select one.

APPENDICES

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Appendix A	Preface and <i>Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development</i>
Appendix B	<i>Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers</i>
Appendix C	<i>Connecticut Common Core of Learning - 1998</i>
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Appendix E	Evaluation Forms
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**CONNECTICUT
GUIDELINES FOR
TEACHER EVALUATION AND
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

Connecticut State Department of Education

May, 1999

PREFACE

The State Board of Education is committed to ensuring that all Connecticut students achieve at higher levels in school and become more productive and more responsible citizens. This is a shared responsibility, involving students, parents, teachers, administrators, employers, community members, local school boards, and state and local government. All students are expected to learn more – and learn it better – than ever before. We must also expect as much from our educators as from our students. These expectations are reflected in Goal Three of *Nurturing the Genius of Connecticut's Students: Connecticut's Comprehensive Plan for Education 1996-2000*.

“to set and meet high standards for the performance of teachers and administrators leading to and evidenced by improved student learning.”

The Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development will assist districts in accomplishing these goals.

Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development

Context

Connecticut Statutes related to teacher evaluation and professional development are attached in Appendix A.

These guidelines replace the teacher evaluation and professional development guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education on December 7, 1993. The new guidelines are designed to build on and strengthen Connecticut's unwavering commitment to equity and excellence in education.

Three Connecticut State Department of Education publications frame the contents of the new guidelines:

1. *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning (CCL)*, which clearly established high expectations for learning for all of Connecticut's children;
2. *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT)*, which defines effective teaching practice throughout the career continuum of teachers – from *pre-service*, through *induction*, as well as for the evaluation and continued professional development of experienced teaching staff. This replaces the 15 Connecticut Teaching Competencies as Connecticut's definition of effective teaching practice.
3. *The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards*, which establish student content and performance standards across all disciplines by grade span (e.g., K through 4, 5 through 8, 9 through 12).

Using these documents as the foundation for teacher evaluation and professional development establishes a critical link between effective teaching and increased student learning. The district's school improvement initiative will become more effective and coherent when teacher evaluation and school improvement processes are integrated with an on-going systematic staff development strategy. While the State has deemed these current benchmarks and standards, it is our obligation to make these standards best-fit Southington Schools.

Introduction

“One of the greatest challenges facing the United States as it looks toward the new millennium is the development of human capacity, specifically, the need for a highly educated, globally aware community of citizens who can lead the country into an era of increasing technological, moral, scientific, political and social complexity. Chief among the developers of our nation’s human capacity are teachers, who, along with parents, share responsibility for the growth of knowledge among the nation’s more than 50 million school-age youth.” (*The Numbers Game – Ensuring the Quantity and Quality in the Teaching Workforce*, NASBE, October, 1998.)

To ensure that all students have competent, high-quality teachers, we must develop an evaluation and support structure that builds human capacities and challenges all educators to aspire to and reach excellence.

However, while we expect more from today’s teachers, there is growing evidence that the investment in the professional development of teachers (Building human capacity) is woefully inadequate and often is viewed by many people in the public and private sectors as not cost beneficial. Business and industry appears to have just the opposite view. They spend considerable dollars on training and building human capacity to maintain profitability and competitiveness.

In summary, the central focus of Connecticut’s guidelines is the investment in ongoing teacher professional development in order to improve student learning. In the design of the teacher evaluation and professional development guidelines, the following principles were used to guide this effort:

- Student learning is directly affected by teacher competence;
- Teacher competence is positively affected by the integration of teacher evaluation and professional development;
- Teachers, like students, must be continual learners;
- An effective evaluation plan requires a clear definition of teaching and learning and a system to assess it; and

- The gaps between expectation's for student performance and actual student performance should guide the content of professional development.

I. Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development Guidelines

All teacher evaluation and professional development plans should:

1a. Show a clear link between teacher evaluation and professional development and improved student learning.

Improvement of student achievement is a critical goal of teacher evaluation and professional development plans. The capacity of teachers to improve student learning- whether as individuals, as member of small groups, as well as members of a school wide community – needs to be strengthened. Teacher evaluation and professional development plans need to focus on improving student learning and should be jointly determined by teachers and administrators. In addition, professional development plans should have provisions for evaluating g their effectiveness in changing teachers' classroom practice and improving student learning.¹ Moreover, professional development plans should permit both independent and collaborative endeavors as well as be designed to support the creativity of all teachers.

1b. Use Connecticut's' Common Core of Learning, The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards, the CMT/CAPT Assessments, s well as locally developed Curriculum Standards as the basis for establishing learning goals at the district and school levels.

Teachers must be involved in all activities that establish standards (curriculum and student) at the district and school levels. Moreover, it is critical that there is mutual agreement among teachers, administrators and school boards around the learning goals and that all agree to be held accountable to the goals.

2a. Use Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching as Connecticut's definition of effective teaching.

Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT) establishes standards of accomplished practice in teaching, pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students. Expectations for accomplished practice for beginning teachers and experienced teachers should be jointly determined by teachers and administrators in the district.

2b. **Show a clear link between the competencies identified in the CFCT, the district's teacher evaluation and professional development plan, and improved student learning.**

The teaching competencies in the CCT should be addressed in the design and development of any comprehensive evaluation and professional development system. The evaluation should be organized around the foundational skills and competencies as well as discipline-based professional standards of the CCT.

- Teachers have a knowledge of students, content and pedagogy;
- Teachers apply this knowledge by planning, creating a positive learning environment, instructing, assessing and adjusting; and
- Teachers demonstrate professional responsibility through professional and ethical practice, reflection and continuous learning, collaboration and leadership.

¹ Student learning is defined broadly to include teacher and administrator assessment of student work samples, performance measures (i.e., holistic scoring of writing) as well as teacher-designed tests and standardized tests (i.e., CMT and CAPT). In addition, technology should be available to permit teachers to disaggregate data (i.e., using the strategic school profile database) to determine program strengths and weaknesses.

3. **Ensure the district-wide teacher evaluation and professional development plan provides opportunities for educators to receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs) based on work directly related to district goals and objectives for students.**

The districts' CEU offerings shall be purposefully designed to meet the professional development needs of teachers as articulated in the teacher evaluation and professional development plan. The plan should be consistent with state guidelines for the issuance of CEUs and developed jointly by teachers and administrators, under the policy direction of the board of education.

4. **Include a clear, written statement describing the connections among teacher evaluation, curriculum development, professional development and student's assessment.**

This statement should be jointly crafted by teachers and administrators and serve to focus the evaluation plan on teaching and learning.

5. **Provide opportunities for self-evaluation by teachers.**

Teachers should evaluate their own performance based upon the district's plan and present evidence to support their self-assessment. This evidence may include documentation of planning, videotapes of teaching, examples of student work, student feedback, documentation of ongoing professional development activities, and examples of collaboration and leadership.

6. **Recognize peer assistance as integral to the ongoing support of teachers in improving teaching and learning.**

Research is clear that teachers learn best from peer support within their field of study. We strongly encourage districts to make time for teachers to provide assistance to their colleagues. Peer assistance requires adequate training and time to perform these very important roles. Among the candidates who might wish to receive this training are national Board-certified teachers, teachers of the

year, celebrants and beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program mentors and assessors. Peer support facilitates the development of a community of learners in the school and is one of the best sources of professional development for teachers.

7. Provide for the training of administrators about the evaluation criteria established by the local school district.

To have a fair, equitable and credible evaluation and professional development plan, administrators must be trained to assess teachers reliably and fairly across schools and within/across disciplines. Districts must also ensure that teachers are knowledgeable about the evaluation criteria.

8. Provide for the allocation of time to facilitate teacher evaluation, collaboration and professional growth.

Time for educators to work together is necessary in order to support a school environment that fosters teacher involvement in the evaluation and professional development process. When collaborative professional development time is built into the daily, weekly or yearlong schedule, both educational practice and student learning improves.

9. Provide for both individual and collaborative evaluation and professional development.

Teachers have different evaluation and professional development needs. Therefore, the plan should provide choices to teachers that will allow them to meet those needs. A one-size-fits-all plan is not acceptable given the diversity and development of teachers from beginning teachers to national board awardees. All plans must have provisions for identifying both collaborative and individual professional development needs. Individual and collaborative goals for teacher should be closely aligned to student learning goals.

II. Key Elements for the Development of a Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development Plan²

1. A clearly written statement of the purpose(s), procedures, responsibilities, timelines and resources needed for implementation of the plan.
2. Evidence of teacher involvement in the design, implementation and evaluation of the plan.
3. Written district goals and objectives for students and related goals for teacher evaluation and professional development.
4. Provision for a process for the gathering and analyzing of data to inform teaching and learning.
5. Provision for presentation of documentation by teachers to support their self-evaluation.
6. Provision for a process to provide feedback that is clear, specific and constructive. Feedback should be timely and used at regular intervals to assess progress on district goals and objectives for students.
7. Provision for a process to provide choices for individuals to grow professionally that are differentiated to address different grade configurations, teacher experiences and the specific demands of the content field.
8. Clear procedures for the documentation of professional development through CEUs, which are linked to the goals of the individuals' and district's professional development plan.
9. A process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and teacher cannot agree on objectives, the evaluation period, feedback, or the professional development plan.
10. Specification of the length of the evaluation period which may vary for employees with different levels of experience and expertise.
11. Clear and specific steps for placing teachers in intensive supervision and/or for removing a teacher (dismissal). These steps must be designed to meet the due process rights of teachers in cases of continued intensive supervision or dismissal.

- The intensive supervision phase should include sufficient opportunities for teachers to obtain assistance from peers and administrators and/or participate in special training that is purposefully designed to build the teacher's capacity to meet district standards.
- A district may opt to refer a teacher who fails to meet the district's minimal standard for teacher performance to an outside agency as a Regional Educational Service Center, college or university, or a CSDE resource bank of trained assessors qualified to provide assistance in improving teaching.
- Based on an agreed upon timetable, sufficient time must be allocated to enable the teacher an opportunity to improve. Consequences of the teacher's performance must be clearly articulated and all steps taken for either the continuance or dismissal of the teacher must be well documented.

²Note that, pursuant to Section 10-151b, the superintendent shall report the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June of each year.

Sec. 10-145b. Teaching certificates. (1) (1) For certified employees of local and regional boards of education, except as provided in this subdivision, each professional educator certificate shall be valid for five years and continued every five years thereafter upon the successful completion of professional development activities which shall consist of not less than ninety hours of continuing education, as determined by the local or regional board of education in accordance with this section, during each successive five-year period. Such continuing education completed by (A) the superintendent of schools and (B) employees employed in positions requiring an intermediate administrator or supervisory certificate, or the equivalent thereof, and whose administrative or supervisory duties equal at least fifty percent of the assigned time of such employee, shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the evaluation of teachers pursuant to section 10-151b during each five-year period. During each five-year period in which a professional educator certificate is valid, a holder of such certificate who has not completed the ninety hours of continuing education required pursuant to the subdivision, and who has not been employed while holding such certificate by a local or regional board of education for all or part of the five-year period, shall, upon application, be reissued such certificate for five years minus any period of time such holder was employed while holding such certificate by a local or regional board of education, provided there shall be only one such re-issuance during each five-year period in which such certificate is valid. A certified employee of a local or regional board of education who is a member of the General Assembly and who has not completed the ninety hours of continuing education required pursuant to this subdivision for continuation of his certificate, upon application, shall be reissued a professional educator certificate for a period of time equal to six months for each year he served in the General Assembly during the previous five years. Continuing education hours completed during the previous five years shall be applied toward such ninety-hour requirement which shall be completed during the re-issuance period in order for such employee to be eligible to have his certificate continued. The cost of the professional development activities required under this subsection for certified employees of local or regional boards of education shall be shared by the state and local or regional boards of education except for those activities identified by the State Board of Education as the responsibility of the certificate holder. Each local and regional board of education shall make available, annually, at no cost to its certified employees not fewer than eighteen

hours of professional development activities for continuing education credit. Such activities may be made available by a board of education directly, through a regional educational service center or cooperative arrangement with another board of education or through arrangements with any continuing education provider approved by the State Board of Education. Local and regional boards of education shall grant continuing education credit for professional development activities which the certified employees of the board of education are required to attend, professional development activities offered in accordance with the plan developed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220a, or professional development activities which the board may approve for any individual certified employee. Each board of education shall determine the specific professional development activities to be made available with the advice and assistance of the teachers employed by such board, including representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for such teachers pursuant to section 10-153b. The time and location for the provision of such activities shall be in accordance with either an agreement between the board of education and the exclusive bargaining unit pursuant to said section 10-153b or, in the absence of such agreement or to the extent such agreement does not provide for the time and location of all such activities, in accordance with a determination by the board of education.

Sec. 10-11b. Evaluation by superintendents of certain educational personnel. (a)

The superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall, in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education for the development of evaluation programs and such other guidelines as may be established by mutual agreement between the local or regional board of education and the teachers; representative chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, continuously evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher. An evaluation pursuant to his subsection shall include, but need not be limited to, strengths, areas needing improvement and strategies for improvement. The superintendent shall report the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June first of each year. For purposes of this section, the term “teacher” shall include each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

(b) Each local and regional board of education shall develop and implement teacher evaluation programs consistent with guidelines established by the State Board of Education and consistent with the plan developed in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of Section 10-220a.

Sec. 10-220a. In-service training. Professional development. Institutes for educators. Cooperating and beginning teacher programs, regulations. (b) Not later than a date prescribed by the commissioner, each local and regional board of education shall develop, with the advise and assistance of the teachers and administrators employed by such boards, including representatives of the exclusive bargaining representative of such teachers and administrators chosen pursuant to section 10-153b, and such other resources as the board deems appropriate, a comprehensive professional development plan, to be implemented not later than the school year 1994-199. Such plan shall be directly related to the educational goals prepared by the local or regional board of education pursuant to subsection (b) of section 10-220, and shall provide for the ongoing and systematic assessment and improvement of both teacher evaluation and professional development of the professional staff members of each such board, including personnel management and evaluation training or experience for administrators, shall be related to regular and special student needs and may include provisions concerning career incentives and parent involvement. The State board of Education shall develop guidelines to assist local and regional boards of education in determining the objectives of the plans and in coordinating staff development activities with student needs and school programs.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHERS**(a) Preamble**

The Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers is a set of principles that the teaching profession expects its members to honor and follow. These principles set forth, on behalf of the teaching profession and the public it serves, standards to guide conduct and the judicious appraisal of conduct in situations that have professional and ethical implications. The Code adheres to the fundamental belief that the student is the foremost reason for the existence of the profession.

The teaching profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideas of professionalism. Therefore, the teacher accepts both the public trust and the responsibilities to practice the profession according to the highest possible degree of ethical conduct and standards. Such responsibilities include the commitment to the students, the teaching profession, and the community.

Consistent with applicable law, the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers shall serve as a basis for decisions on issues pertaining to licensure and employment. It shall apply to all teachers licensed by or individuals seeking licensure from the State of Connecticut. For the purposes of this section, “teacher” means a person who is applying for, who holds or who is employed under a teaching certificate, or other equivalent certificate, issued by the state board of education.

(b) Responsibility to the student

1. The professional teacher, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the student, shall:

- a. Recognize, respect and uphold the dignity and worth of students as individual human beings, and, therefore, deal justly and considerately with students;

- b. Engage students in the pursuit of truth, knowledge and wisdom and provide access to all points of view without deliberate distortion of subject matter;
 - c. Nurture in students lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion, or sexual orientation;
 - d. Foster in students the full understanding, application and preservation of democratic principles and processes;
 - e. Guide students to acquire the requisite skills and understanding for participatory citizenship and to realize their obligation to be worthy and contributing members of society;
 - f. Assist students in the formulation of value systems and worthy, positive goals;
 - g. Promote the right and freedom of students to learn, explore ideas, develop learning skills and acquire the necessary knowledge to achieve their full potential;
 - h. Strive to develop within students fundamental critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques;
 - i. Remain steadfast in guaranteeing equal opportunity for quality education for all children, and not unlawfully discriminate; and
 - j. Maintain the confidentiality of all information concerning students obtained in the proper course of the educational process, and dispense such information only when prescribed or directed by federal or state law or professional practice.
2. The Professional teacher, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the student, shall not:
- a. Abuse his or her position as a professional with students for private advantage;
 - b. Sexually or physically harass or abuse students;
 - c. Emotionally abuse students;
 - d. Engage in any misconduct that would put students at risk.

(c) Responsibility to the profession

1. The professional teacher, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:
 - a. Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her action reflects directly upon the status and substance of the profession;
 - b. Uphold the professional teacher's right to teach effectively;
 - c. Uphold the principle of academic freedom;
 - d. Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment;
 - e. Assume responsibility for his or her professional development;
 - f. Encourage the participation of teachers in the process of educational decision-making;
 - g. Promote the employment of only qualified and fully licensed teachers;
 - h. Encourage promising, qualified and competent individuals to enter the profession;
 - i. Decline any gratuity, gift or favor that would impair or influence professional decisions or actions; and
 - j. Maintain the confidentiality of all information concerning colleagues obtained in the proper course of the educational process, and dispense such information only when prescribed or directed by federal or state law or professional practice.
2. The professional teacher, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall not:
 - a. Obtain licensure or employment by misrepresentation or fraud;
 - b. Misrepresent his, her or another's professional qualifications or competencies; or
 - c. Engage in any misconduct that would impair his or her ability to teach.
 - d. Responsibility to the community

1. The professional teacher, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the teaching profession, shall:
 - a. Be cognizant of the influence of teachers upon the community-at-large, and, therefore, shall not knowingly misrepresent facts or make false statements;
 - b. Encourage the community to exercise its responsibility to be involved in the formulation of educational policy;
 - c. Promote the principles and ideas of democratic citizenship; and
 - d. Endeavor to secure equal educational opportunities for all children.
 2. The professional teacher, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the teaching profession, shall not:
 - a. Exploit the educational institution for personal gain; or
 - b. Be convicted in a court of law of a crime involving moral turpitude or of any crime of such nature that violates such public trust.
- e. Code Revision

At least every two years following its implementation, the Connecticut Advisory Council shall review this Code for potential revision for Teacher Professional Standards. As a part of such reviews, a process shall be established to receive input and comment from all interested parties.

CONNECTICUT'S COMMON CORE OF LEARNING – 1998

INTRODUCTION

Connecticut's Common Core of Learning has been created as a set of high expectations we hold for *all* of Connecticut's students. While it is understood that students enter school at different levels of readiness, with different interest and with varying aspirations, these differences do not notify the development of a different Common Core for each student. To the contrary, the goal of each student developing to his or her fullest potential argues for the creation of one Common core that sets no limits on anyone and allows each to attain his or her dreams.

Accordingly, the Common Core establishes a vision of what Connecticut's high school graduates should know and be able to do as a result of participating in the entire K-12 school experience. The Common Core articulates Connecticut expectation for all its schools and all its youth by describing abilities that are necessary not just for employment and further education, but also for becoming a productive member of society. The Common Core is not meant to define a minimum set of competencies; rather, it is designed to set and define the high standards required for students to become fully educated citizens.

This revision of *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning* is organized under the three major headings that follow, with subheadings that reflect significant groups of skills, knowledge and aspects of character:

Foundational Skills and Competencies

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking, Listening and Viewing
- Quantifying
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Creative Thinking
- Learning Resources and Information Technology
- Working Independently and Collaboratively

Understandings and Applications: Discipline-Based and Interdisciplinary Skills

- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- World Languages
- The Arts
- Health and Safety Education
- Physical Education
- Technology Education
- Applied Education
 - School-to-Career Transition
 - Preparing for Adult Life and Lifelong Learning

Aspects of Character

- Responsibility and Integrity
- Effort and Persistence
- Intellectual Curiosity
- Respect
- Citizenship and Sense of Community

The order of the three major headings does not represent their relative importance, nor does it imply a sequence of instruction. Rather, the order reflects a belief that discipline-based content must be interconnected. This represents a larger view of curriculum in which instruction across the disciplines includes the development of the necessary aspects of character and foundational skills.

Students learn best when they are appropriately motivated and self-confident. Although these are by-products of effective instruction, the attitudes and aspects of character delineated in the Common Core are also preconditions for mastering specific skills. While generally taught directly or included in a written curriculum, these aspects of character, along with many of the skills and competencies, must continually be

developed during instruction in the traditional curriculum described in the understandings and applications area and through guidance formally provided in the schools.

Further, the Common Core of Learning should not be misconstrued as a set of isolated skills and understandings. To the contrary, it should be viewed as an integrated and interdependent set of expectations. Users of the Common Core should continually look for cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches and for the transfer of skills and knowledge from one subject area to another. In fact, many items listed under a particular subheading could easily have been included under others.

The Common Core is not a curriculum. Each school district's curriculum will be more comprehensive and significantly more specific, including a wide range of learning experiences and instructional strategies. To assist districts in setting forth their own curriculum standards, the State Department of Education is publishing a companion document to *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning* titled *The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curriculum Goals and Standards*.

Finally, the Common Core of Learning has been developed neither as a state mandate nor as a condition for graduation. It has been developed to generate discussion and stimulate change in school programs, student's objectives, resource allocations and teaching. It is offered as a catalyst for curricular change and school improvement by providing a statement of the high expectations needed in order that all Connecticut students become fully educated.

Connecticut's Common Core of Learning reflects a commitment to excellence in public elementary and secondary education. The implementation of the Common Core will help develop young people who can think and act independently and work with others, and will assist Connecticut's schools in leading its students into the 21st century with confidence and clear direction.

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

All educated citizens must possess a core of basic, enabling skills and competencies that provide a foundation for broader acquisition of knowledge. These foundational, cross-disciplinary skills and competencies, applied in diverse ways, form the heart of an academic experience as each contributes to the development of understanding within and among the disciplines. Moreover, these skills and competencies are necessary for productive participation in society, and for lifelong learning.

Reading

Students develop the proficiency, confidence and fluency in reading needed to meet the literacy demands of the 21st century.

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Read a variety of literary, informational and persuasive texts with understanding and meaningfully analyze, interpret, evaluate and enjoy them;
- Read to understand, including identifying main and subordinate ideas, details and facts; to interpret; and to response to a variety of written materials;
- Read to analyze, including making comparisons, drawing inferences and contrasts, and identifying sequences;
- Read to evaluate, including separating fact from opinion; recognizing propaganda, stereotypes and statements of bias; recognizing inconsistency; and judging the validity of evidence and sufficiency of support;
- Use the features and structure of books and other reference materials, such as table of contents, preface, introduction, titles and subtitles, index, glossary, appendix and bibliography; and
- Improve comprehension by using a variety of strategies, including self-correcting, questioning, predicting, reviewing and reading ahead.

Writing

Students develop the proficiency, confidence and fluency in writing needed to meet the literacy demands of the 21st century.

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Produce written materials which develop thoughts, share information, influence and persuade, and create and entertain;
- Use the conventions of standard English to communicate clearly;
- Demonstrate the use of elements of effective writing, including setting, purpose, presenting in a logical organization, and elaborating by selecting and using detailed examples, illustrations and evidence;
- Select forms of expression for different audiences, including using appropriate style and voice;
- Improve their own writing, including redrafting, restructuring, revising, correcting errors and editing; and
- Gather information from primary and secondary sources to write reports using that information and the quotes, paraphrases and summaries accurately.

Speaking, Listening and Viewing

Students develop the proficiency, confidence and fluency in speaking, listening and viewing needed to meet the literacy demands of the 21st century.

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Comprehend verbal and nonverbal presentations at the literal, inferential and evaluative levels;
- Listen and view in order to analyze, clarify and establish context;
- Understand spoken instruction, give spoken instructions to others, ask meaningful questions, and answer questions correctly and concisely;
- Speak using appropriate conventions (usage and word choice), forms of expression (style and voice), and tools (technology and media); and
- Deliver oral and visual presentations using a coherent sequence of thought, clarity of presentation, suitable vocabulary and length, and nonverbal communication appropriate for the purpose and audience.

Quantifying

Students develop the basic computational skills and mathematical techniques essential to understanding the numerical world and solving quantitative problems.

As a result of education in Grades k-12, students will:

- Demonstrate number sense by using numbers for counting, measuring, comparing, ordering, scaling, locating and labeling;
- Add, subtract, multiply and divide with whole numbers, fractions, decimals and integers;
- Make estimates and approximations, and judge the reasonableness of results;
- Understand and use ratios, proportions and percents;
- Make and use measurements in both customary and metric units to approximate, measure and compute lengths, areas, volumes, mass, temperatures and time;
- Organize data into tables, charts and graphs, and read, interpret and draw conclusions from the data; and
- Understand and apply basic algebraic and geometric concepts.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Creative Thinking

Students explore information and arguments from various points of view to think critically and creatively and to solve problems.

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Apply prior knowledge, abstract thinking, curiosity, imagination and creativity to solve problems;
- Use inductive reasoning to make, defend and evaluate conjectures and arguments, and deductive reasoning to justify assertions and verify tentative conclusions;
- Use problem-solving skills to formulate problems, identify patterns and trends, and make and justify decisions and predictions;
- Examine, define and redefine ideas and problems from a variety of perspectives;

- Create, imagine and explore new ideas to generate alternative strategies, consider advantages and disadvantages, and select among alternative possibilities;
- Assess the results of selected actions and respond constructively to unanticipated events or outcomes; and
- Apply defensible criteria to make aesthetic and other qualitative judgments.

LEARNING RESOURCES AND INFORMATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

By the end of Grade 12, students will be independent, competent and confident users of information and technology and able to apply related strategies for acquiring basic skills and content knowledge, communicating ideas, solving problems and pursuing personal interests.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Identify and apply a wide range of educational technologies to conduct research, communicate information and ideas, create original works, organize data and solve problems;
- Use effective and efficient strategies to explore and use an information – and technology-rich environment to gain knowledge, deepen understanding and solve complex problems;
- Use technology to enhance essential skills and facilitate learning in the content areas; and
- Apply the skills necessary to locate, evaluate, interpret and synthesize information from print, nonprint and electronic sources.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Defining Information Needs	Students will define their information needs and identify effective courses of action to conduct research, solve complex problems and pursue personal interests.
2. Information Systems	Students will apply principles of organized information systems to learning endeavors.
3. Information Strategies	Students will demonstrate a command of information skills and strategies to locate and use effectively print, nonprint and/or electronic resources to solve problems, conduct research and pursue personal interests.
4. Information Processing	Students will apply evaluative criteria to the selection, interpretation, analysis, reorganization and synthesis of information from a variety of sources and formats.
5. Application	Students will use appropriate technologies to create written, visual, oral and multimedia products to communicate ideas, information or conclusions to others.
6. Evaluation	Students will evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of their own choices and use of information and technology for problem solving and communication.
7. Responsible Information Use	Students will demonstrate the responsible and legal use of information resources, computers and other technologies, recognizing the attendant social, economic and ethical issues.

Working Independently and Collaboratively

Students work and learn independently (effectively allocating time, energy and resources) and collaboratively as part of a team (contributing to group efforts and understandings).

As a result of education in Grades k-12, students will:

- Set rigorous, challenging and reasonable learning goals;
- Set priorities, allocate time and follow schedules to meet objectives;
- Assess progress and make necessary adjustments to meet goals;
- Demonstrate friendliness, adaptability, empathy and politeness in group settings;
- Develop productive and satisfying relationships with others based on mutual respect;
- Employ a variety of strategies for constructively resolving conflicts and participate actively in reaching group decisions and meeting group goals;
- Communicate ideas to justify positions, persuade others, and responsibly challenge existing procedures, policies and opinions;
- Work toward agreements by resolving divergent interests and opinions;
- Work effectively with women and men from all backgrounds; and
- Understand the concepts of prejudice and bias, and the effect each has on interpersonal relations.

In addition to regular classroom instruction, students will receive “developmental guidance” throughout K-12 experience that will promote good character and citizenship. The section highlighting aspects of character (page 26) further describes student competencies that are critical parts of the developmental guidance curriculum.

UNDERSTANDINGS AND APPLICATIONS: DISCIPLINE-BASED AND INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS

Skills and competencies cannot be ends in themselves. Rather, they are necessary enablers of the development of core discipline-based and interdisciplinary understandings and applications. These understandings and applications provide students with the knowledge and intellectual tools to be lifelong learners, as they constitute the major content of the curriculum. While these understandings and applications have been grouped by traditional disciplines, it is important to recognize the interrelationships among the disciplines and to promote students' abilities to transfer knowledge across subject areas.

LANGUAGE ARTS

By the end of Grade 12, students will develop proficiency, confidence and fluency in reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing to meet the literacy demands of the 21st century.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Read, write, speak, listen and view to construct meaning of written, visual and oral texts;
- Read with understanding and respond thoughtfully to a variety of texts;
- Write and speak English proficiently to communicate ideas clearly;
- Create works using the language arts in visual, oral and written texts;
- Choose and apply strategies that enhance the fluent and proficient use of language arts;
- Understand and appreciate texts from many historical periods and cultures; and
- Employ the language arts for lifelong learning, work and enjoyment.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Reading and Responding	Students will read and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts.
2. Producing Texts	Students will produce written, oral and visual texts to express develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.
3. Applying English Language Conventions	Students will apply the conventions of Standard English in oral and written communication.
4. Exploring and Responding to Texts	Students will use the language arts to explore and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and historical periods.

MATHEMATICS

By the end of Grade 12, students will apply proficiently a range of numerical, algebraic, geometric and statistical concepts and skills to formulate, analyze and solve real-world problems; to facilitate inquiry and the exploration of real-world phenomena; and to support continued development and appreciation of mathematics as a discipline.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Communicate numerical, geometric, algebraic and statistical ideas orally and in written form with models, pictures, graphs and mathematical symbols, using paper and pencil, a variety of calculator displays, spreadsheets, graphing packages, word processing and other related computer software;
- Use inductive and deductive reasoning to make, defend and evaluate conjectures and arguments, to justify assertions and verify tentative conclusions, and to solve mathematical problems;
- Use mathematical skills and concepts to make and justify decisions and predictions, to identify patterns and trends, to pose questions from data and situations, and to formulate and solve problems;
- Identify and use connections within mathematics to identify interrelationships and equivalent representations, to construct mathematical models, and to investigate and appreciate mathematical structure;

- Use mathematical skills and concepts to describe and analyze data and measurements from other disciplines;
- Select and use appropriate approaches and tools for solving computational, geometric and algebraic problems, including estimation, mental computation, guess and test, paper and pencil, calculators and computers with software for tabulating, charting, graphing, drawing and transforming data and images; and
- Use mathematical skills and concepts with proficiency and confidence, and appreciate the power and utility of mathematics as a discipline and as a tool for solving problems.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Number Sense	Students will use numbers to count, measure, compare, order, scale locate and label, and use a variety of numerical representations to present, interpret, communicate and connect various kinds of numerical information.
2. Operations	Students will add, subtract, multiply and divide with whole numbers, fractions, decimals and integers, and develop strategies for selecting the appropriate computational and operational methods for solving problems.
3. Estimation and Approximation	Students will make estimates and approximations, and judge the reasonableness of results.
4. Ratios, Proportions, and Percents	Students will use ratios, proportions and percents to represent relationships between quantities and measures and solve problems involving ratios, proportions and percents.
5. Measurement	Students will make and use measurements in both customary and metric units to approximate, measure and compute length, area, volume, mass, temperature, angle and time.
6. Spatial Relationships and Geometry	Students will analyze and use spatial relationships and basic concepts of geometry to construct, draw, describe and compare geometric models and their transformations, and use geometric relationships and patterns to solve problems.
7. Probability and Statistics	Students will use basic concepts of probability and statistics to collect, organize, display and analyze data, simulate events and test hypotheses.
8. Patterns	Students will discover, analyze, describe, extend and create patterns, and use patterns to describe mathematical and other real-world phenomena.
9. Algebra and Functions	Students will use algebraic skills and concepts, including functions, to describe real-world phenomena symbolically and graphically, and to model quantitative change.
10. Discrete Mathematics	Students will use the concepts and processes of discrete mathematics to analyze and model a variety of real-world situations that involve recurring relationships, sequences, networks, combinations and permutations.

SCIENCE

By the end of Grade 12, students will know the basic concepts of, and the interrelationships among, biology, chemistry, physics and earth (including ecology) and space sciences, and will be able to apply scientific skills, processes and methods of inquiry to real-world settings.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12 students will:

- Understand and apply basic concepts, principles and theories of biology, chemistry, physics, and earth (including ecology) and space sciences and their interrelationships;
- Recognize and participate in scientific endeavors which are evidence based and use inquiry skills that lead to a greater understanding of the world;
- Identify and solve problems through scientific exploration, including the formulation of hypotheses; design of experiments, use of technology, analysis of data and drawing of conclusions;
- Select and properly use appropriate laboratory technology, equipment and materials including measuring and sensing devices;
- Understand and use, when appropriate, existing and emerging technologies which have an effect on society and our quality of life, including personal, academic and work environments;
- Analyze the possibilities and limits of science and technology in order to make and defend decisions about societal issues; and
- Understand that the way in which scientific knowledge is formulated is crucial to the validity of that knowledge.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

1. The Nature of Science	Students will experience an inquiry-based learning environment in which they are free to ask questions, seek information and validate explanations in thoughtful and creative ways. Students also will understand that the processes, ways of knowing and conceptual foundations of science are interdependent and inextricably bound.
2. History of Science	Students will learn the evolution of scientific thought, how science has influenced culture and society, and how groups from many countries have contributed to the history of science.
3. Living Things and Their Environments	Students will understand that all organisms in the biosphere are linked to each other and to their physical environments by the transfer and transformation of matter and energy.
4. Units of Structure and Function	Students will understand that living things share common materials and structures, which perform basic life functions.
5. Relationships of Structure and Function	Students will understand the classification and physiology of the great diversity of organisms and identify relationships of structure and function.
6. Cycles of Life	Students will recognize patterns and products of genetics and evolution.
7. The Earth	Students will understand the processes and forces that shape the structure and composition of the Earth.
8. Water	Students will understand the water cycle, including energy transfers, the distribution and characteristics of water, and its influences on human activity.
9. The Earth's Atmosphere	Students will understand the compositions and structure of the atmosphere, including energy transfers, the nature of weather and climate, and the effect of the atmosphere on human activity.
10. The Universe	Students will understand that the Earth is a unique, dynamic member of the solar system, located in a galaxy within a changing universe.
11. Structure of Matter	Students will know the characteristic properties of matter and the relationship of these properties to structure and composition.
12. Energy	Students will know that energy is conserved, transferred, transformed and appears in different forms.
13. Interaction of Matter and Energy	Students will know that interactions between matter and energy can produce changes in a system, although the total quantities of matter and energy are unchanged.
14. Science and Technology	Students will understand the relationships among mathematics, science and technology, and the way they affect and are affected by society.

SOCIAL STUDIES

By the end of Grade 12, students will gain a knowledge of history, civics and government, geography and economics; understand the interaction between and among history, the social sciences and humanities; and apply that knowledge and understanding as responsible citizens.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the structure of United States and world history to understand life and events in the past and how they relate to one's own life experience;
- Analyze the historical roots and the current complexity of relations among nations in and increasingly interdependent world;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of culture and how different perspectives emerge from different cultures;
- Apply geographic knowledge, skills and concepts to understand human behavior in relation to the physical and cultural environment;
- Describe the relationships among the individual, the groups and the institutions which exist in any society and culture;
- Demonstrate knowledge of how people create rules and laws to regulate the dynamic relationships of individual rights and societal needs;
- Apply concepts from the study of history, culture, economics and government to the understandings of the relationships among science, technology and society;
- Describe how people organize systems for the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services;
- Demonstrate an understanding of how ideals, principles and practices of citizenship have emerged over time and across cultures; and
- Describe how the study of individual development and identity contributes to the understanding of human behavior.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

History

	Through the study of United States and world history:
1. Historical Thinking	Students will develop historical thinking skills, including chronological thinking and recognizing change over time; contextualizing, comprehending and analyzing historical literature; researching historical literature; researching historical sources; understanding the concept of historical causation; understanding competing narratives and interpretation; and constructing narratives and interpretation.
2. Local, United States and World History	Students will use historical thinking skills to develop an understanding of the major historical periods, issues and trends in United States history, world history, and Connecticut and local history.
3. Historical Themes	Students will apply their understanding of historical periods, issues and trends to examine such historical themes as ideals, beliefs and institutions; conflict and conflict resolutions; human movement and interaction; and science and technology in order to understand how the world came to be the way it is.
4. Applying History	Students will recognize the continuing importance of historical thinking and historical knowledge in their own lives and in the world in which they live.

Civics and Government

	Through the study of civics and government:
5. United States Constitution and Government	Students will apply knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, how the U.S. system of government works and how the rule of law and the value of liberty and equality have an impact on individual, local, state and national decisions.
6. Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens	Students will demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizens to participate and shape public policy, and contribute to the maintenance of our democratic way of life.
7. Political Systems	Students will explain that political systems emanate from the need of humans for order, leading to compromise and the establishment of authority.
8. International Relations	Students will demonstrate an understanding of how the major elements of international relations and world affairs affect their lives and the security and well-being of their community, state and nation.

Geography

	Through the study of geography:
9. Places and Regions	Students will use spatial perspective to identify and analyze the significance of physical and cultural characteristics of places and world regions.
10. Physical Systems	Students will use spatial perspective to explain the physical processes that shape the Earth's surface and its ecosystems.
11. Human Systems	Students will interpret spatial patterns of human migration, economic activities and political units in Connecticut, the nation and the world.
12. Human and Environmental Interaction	Students will use geographic tools and technology to explain the interactions of humans and the larger environment, and the evolving consequences of those interactions.

Economics

	Through the study of economics:
13. Limited Resources	Students will demonstrate that because human, natural and capital resources are limited, individuals, households, businesses and governments must make choices.
14. Economic Systems	Students will demonstrate that various economic systems coexist, and that economic decisions are made by individuals and/or governments, influenced by markets, cultural traditions, individuals and governments in the allocation of goods and services.
15. Economic Interdependence	Students will demonstrate how the exchange of goods and services by individuals, groups and nations creates economic interdependence and change.

World Languages

By the end of Grade 12, students will listen, speak, read and write proficiently in at least one language other than English, and will understand the culture(s) of that language.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Communicate in at least one language other than English;
- Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures;
- Make connections with other areas of study and acquire information;

- Understand the nature of language and cultures through comparisons; and
- Participate in multilingual communities within a variety of contexts.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

	In at least one language other than English:
1. Communication	Students will engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feelings and exchange opinions.
2. Communication	Students will understand and interpret spoken and written language on a variety of topics.
3. Communication	Students will present information, concepts and ideas to listeners or readers on a variety of topics.
4. Cultures	Students will demonstrate an understanding of the traditions, products and perspectives of the cultures studied.
5. Connections	Students will reinforce and expand their knowledge of other areas of study through the world language.
6. Connections	Students will acquire and use information from a variety of sources only available in the world language, using technology, print, audiovisual, media, data and human resources.
7. Comparisons Among Languages	Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of that world language and their own.
8. Comparisons Among Cultures	Students will demonstrate an understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.
9. Communities	Students will use the world language both within and beyond the school setting for personal enjoyment, enrichment and active participation.

THE ARTS

By the end of Grade 12, students will create, perform and respond with understanding to all of the arts, including dance, music, theatre and the visual arts; develop in-depth skills in at least one art form; appreciate the importance of the arts in expressing human experience; and be prepared to apply their arts skills and understandings throughout their lifetime.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Create (imagine, experiment, plan, make, evaluate, refine and present/exhibit) art works that express concepts, ideas and feelings in each art form;
- Perform (select, analyze, interpret, rehearse, evaluate, refine and present) diverse art works in each art form;
- Respond (select, experience, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate) with understanding to diverse art works and performances in each art form;
- Understand and use the materials, techniques, forms (structures, styles, genres), language, notation (written symbol system) and literature/repertoire of each art form;
- Understand the importance of the arts in expressing and illuminating human experiences, beliefs and values;
- Identify representative works and recognize the characteristics of art, music, theatre and dance from different historical periods and cultures;
- Develop sufficient mastery of at least one art form to continue lifelong involvement in that art form not only as responders (audience members), but also as creators or performers;
- Develop sufficient mastery of at least one art form to be able to pursue further study, if they choose, in preparation for a career;
- Seek arts experiences and participate in the artistic life of the school and community; and
- Understand the connections among the arts, other disciplines and daily life.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

Dance

1. Elements and Skills	Students will identify and perform movement elements and dance skills.
2. Choreography	Students will understand choreographic principles, processes and structures.
3. Meaning	Students will understand how dance creates and communicates meaning.
4. Thinking Skills	Students will apply analytical and evaluative thinking skills in dance.
5. History and Cultures	Students will demonstrate an understanding of dance in various cultures and historical periods.
6. Healthful Living	Students will make connections between dance and healthful living.
7. Connections	Students will make connections between dance, other disciplines and daily life.

Music

1. Vocal	Students will sing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of songs.
2. Instrumental	Students will play, along and with others, a varied repertoire of instrumental music.
3. Improvisation	Students improvise melodies, variations and accompaniments.
4. Composition	Students will compose and arrange music.
5. Notation	Students will read and notate music.
6. Analysis	Students will listen to, describe and analyze music.
7. Evaluation	Students will evaluate music and music performances.
8. Connections	Students will make connections between music, other disciplines and daily life.
9. History and Cultures	Students will understand music in relation to history and culture.

Theatre

{“Theatre” includes live improvised and scripted work as well as film, television and other electronic media.}

1. Creating	Students will create theatre through improvising, writing and refining scripts.
2. Acting	Students will act by developing, communicating and sustaining characters.
3. Technical Production	Students will design and produce the technical elements of theatre through artistic interpretation and execution.
4. Directing	Students will direct by planning or interpreting works of theatre and by organizing and conducting rehearsals.
5. Researching and Interpreting	Students will research, evaluate and apply cultural and historical information to make artistic choices.
6. Connections	Students will make connections between theatre, other disciplines and daily life.
7. Analysis, Criticism and Meaning	Students will analyze, critique and construct meanings from works of theatre.
8. History and Cultures	Students will demonstrate an understanding of context by analyzing and comparing theatre in various cultures and historical periods.

Visual Arts

1. Media	Students will understand, select and apply media, techniques and processes.
2. Elements and Principles	Students will understand and apply elements and organizational principles of art.
3. Content	Students will consider, select and apply a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas.
4. History and Cultures	Students will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.
5. Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation	Students will reflect upon, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate their own and others' work.
6. Connections	Students will make connections between the visual arts, other disciplines and daily life.

HEALTH AND SAFETY EDUCATION

By the end of Grade 12, students will develop and maintain behaviors that promote lifelong health.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Recognize and practice health-enhancing lifestyles;
- Use core information to analyze and evaluate health and safety issues, information and resources in order to become healthy, responsible citizens;
- Strengthen communication skills and promote peaceful resolution of conflicts by appreciating and respecting others; and
- Make decisions, set goals and learn to say “no”, when appropriate, in order to implement and sustain a healthy life.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Healthy and Active Life	Students will establish and maintain healthy eating patterns and a physically active life.
2. Injury and Disease Prevention	Students will avoid risk-taking activities that cause intentional and unintentional injuries or diseases. Students will demonstrate basic first aid and safety techniques.
3. Human Growth and Development	Students will learn accurate information about their physical development, including human sexuality and mental and emotional health. Students will avoid behaviors that result in pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
4. Substance Abuse Prevention	Students will establish and maintain lifestyles that are free of tobacco, alcohol and other nonmedicinal drugs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

By the end of Grade 12, students will recognize the importance of and choose to participate regularly in physical activities designed to maintain and enhance healthy lifestyles.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades k-12, students will:

- Demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in a variety of physical activities;
- Make decisions to establish and maintain a healthy lifestyle to promote individual wellness throughout his or her entire life;
- Recognize and understand the different effects of physical activity on one's mind and body; and
- Develop interpersonal skills and exhibit positive character traits during physical activity.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Physical Activity	Students will become competent in a variety of, and proficient in a few, physical activities.
2. Human Movement	Students will understand and apply principles of human movement to the learning and development of motor skills.
3. Fitness	Students will use fitness concepts to achieve and maintain health-enhancing levels of physical fitness.
4. Responsible Behavior	Students will exhibit responsible personal and social behaviors in physical activity settings.
5. Respect for Differences	Students will exhibit an understanding of and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings.
6. Benefits of Physical Activity	Students will identify and understand how physical activity provides personal enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and social interaction.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

By the end of Grade 12, students will know about the nature, power, influence and effects of technology, and will be able to design and develop products, systems and environments to solve problems.

Program Goals

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Evaluate the effects of existing and emerging technologies on people and the environment over time;
- Recognize the scope of technology and evaluate the impact and influence technology has on society, culture and the environment – past, present and future;
- Develop and use strategies for adjusting to new technologies and changing interactions among science, technology and society;
- Develop cognitive and psychomotor problem-solving skills through applied research, design, production, operation and analysis of technological systems (informational, physical and biological);
- Safely and effectively use the resources, processes, concepts and tools of technology;
- Create devices for solving problems, using creativity and concepts of design and technology; and
- Understand the influences of technology on consumer and career choices.

K-12 CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Economics	Students will understand the link between technology and the economy, and recognize that link as the force behind societal emergence and evolution.
2. Technological Impacts	Students will understand the impact that technology has on the social, cultural and environmental aspects of their lives.
3. Career Awareness	Students will become aware of the world of work and its function in society, diversity, expectations, trends and requirements.
4. Problem Solving/Research and Development	Students will recognize technology as the result of a creative act, and will be able to apply disciplined problem-solving strategies to enhance invention and innovation.
5. Leadership	Students will identify and develop leadership attributes and apply them in team situations.
6. Materials and Processes	Students will know the origins, properties and processing techniques associated with the material building blocks of technology.
7. Communication Systems	Students will understand and be able to effectively apply physical, graphic and electronic communications techniques in processing, transmitting, receiving and organizing information.
8. Production Systems	Students will understand and be able to demonstrate the methods involved in turning raw materials into usable products.
9. Transportation Systems	Students will understand transportation systems and the environments used to move goods and people, and the subsystems common to each.
10. Enterprise	Students will demonstrate the techniques of enterprise and how they related to product and service production, economics, human and material resources, and technology.
11. Engineering Design	Students will be able to apply the engineering design process to achieve desired outcomes across all technology content areas.

APPLIED EDUCATION

By the end of Grade 12, students will have learned how to apply the academic, critical, practical, technical, technological and employability skills needed for success in higher education and the workplace, and to manage their personal lives.

School-to-Career Transition

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Embrace work and career as a part of their future;
- Acquire employability skills, including academic and technical skills;
- Demonstrate positive attitudes toward work, including acceptance of the necessity of making a living and an appreciation of the social value and dignity of work;
- Demonstrate attitudes and habits that are valued in the workplace, including pride in good workmanship, dependability and regular attendance;
- Explore a range of careers and acquire specific knowledge or experience for one of eight career clusters – arts and media; business and finance; construction technologies and design; environmental, natural resources and agriculture; government, education and human services; health and biosciences; retail, tourism, recreation and entrepreneurial; and technologies: manufacturing, communications and repair;
- Explore career and postsecondary educational opportunities through performance-based learning experiences;
- Manage data and use problem-solving and analytical skills to make reasoned decisions about employment, societal, political and economic issues; and
- Expect multiple career changes over their lifetime.

Preparing for Adult Life and Lifelong Learning

As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Understand the implications of living in a finite world and will learn to optimize available financial, human and environmental resources;
- Understand the role of systems throughout our society, recognize that systems consist of interactive, interrelated and interdependent components, and will be equipped to work within these systems;
- Understand the dynamic nature of society and the universality of change, and be flexible enough to work within this context;
- Build positive family relationships; and
- Understand and prepare for parenting, family and child-care responsibilities.

Aspects of Character

Aspects of character are both preconditions to, learning. Effort, perseverance and intellectual curiosity are determinants of effective goal setting and achievement. Respect for oneself and others influences social behavior. To contribute to the vitality of modern society, students must understand the necessity of moral, ethical and legal

conduct, and strive to balance individual rights with the common good. Responsibility and integrity, and citizenship and sense of community are the foundations for constructive and productive participation in a democratic society.

The family, as well as societal forces other than schools, plays major roles in fostering positive aspects of character that are critical to the successful development of lifelong learners, productive workers and effective citizens. At the school level the guidance department has role in developing the character of students and ensuring that these aspects of character are reinforced in all disciplines. While it is inappropriate for schools to accept the sole or even primary responsibility of developing these aspects of character, it is also inappropriate to deny the critical importance of these factors as preconditions to learning, and as consequences of the teaching of all disciplines to all students.

Responsibility and Integrity

Students demonstrate a sense of ethics and take responsibility of their commitments and actions.

As part of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Demonstrate honesty, dependability and self-control;
- Assume responsibility for their behavior, think before they act, consider the possible consequences on all people affected by their actions, and assume responsibility for the consequences of those actions;
- Develop criteria for making informed judgments and decisions, and uphold their beliefs in order to conduct themselves in a moral, ethical and legal manner; and
- Assume primary responsibility for learning, including identifying their needs and setting reasonable goals.

Effort and Persistence

Students demonstrate the effort and persistence needed to be successful in school, work and life.

As part of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Develop initiative to accept challenges and responsibilities which will help them grow and to which they can make a contribution;
- Persist on their own, without the need for close supervision;
- Persist until new material is mastered or until a job is done, and experience the pride of accomplishment that results from hard work;
- Act through a desire to succeed rather than a fear of failure, while recognizing that failure is a part of everyone's experience;
- Take the risks necessary for fulfilling their ambitions, and persevere in the face of challenge and obstacles; and
- Respond constructively to criticism, being willing and able to incorporate suggestions from others into their efforts to grow.

Intellectual Curiosity

Students actively explore the world of ideas.

As part of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Demonstrate inquiring attitudes, open-mindedness and curiosity;
- Create and explore new ideas and adapt existing ideas to generate alternative possibilities;
- Demonstrate independence of thought necessary for leadership and creativity; and
- Pursue lifelong learning.

Respect

Students demonstrate respect for themselves and others.

As part of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Appreciate their worth as unique and capable individuals and exhibit self-esteem;
- Develop a sense of their effectiveness and a belief in their ability to shape their future;
- Demonstrate a sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others; and
- Judge others on their merits and be tolerant, appreciative and accepting of individual differences.

Citizenship and Sense of Community

Students are active, constructive members of the larger community.

As part of education in Grades K-12, students will:

- Develop a sense of belonging to a group larger than friends, family and co-workers;
- Stay informed about and participate in decisions regarding school, community, state, country and world;
- Develop and understanding of the importance of each individual to the improvement of the quality of life for all in the community; and
- Understand and appreciate their historical and ethnic heritage as well as the heritage of others within the larger community.