A NEW MODEL FOR TEACHER EVALUATION

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation process is based on observations framed by the effective teaching rubric. The goal of the observation and evaluation process is to provide an environment that supports continuous improvement for every teacher, even those who may be highly effective. At the same time every teacher is held accountable for achieving and maintaining a minimum level of performance as an effective teacher.

The evaluation cycle results in the calculation of one overall performance level based on a four-point scale that is also reflected in the rubric, with the following designations:

Level 4: High Effective
Level 3: Effective
Level 2: Developing
Level 1: Does Not Meet Standards

A separate document describes the observation process.

THE EVALUATION CYCLE

The evaluation cycle is differentiated based on where teachers are in their performance cycle, including non-tenured teachers, tenured teachers who are rated as effective (Level 3) or above, and tenured teachers who are rated as less than effective (below Level 3). The frequency of evaluations and the supports provided to a teacher to improve his or her teaching will vary based on where a teacher falls in the cycle.

If an administrator has concerns about the performance of a teacher, supported by observations or other evidence, then the administrator may conduct an additional evaluation at any time within the teacher’s evaluation cycle.

Note: The timelines identified below will not begin until 2016-2017, the second year following full implementation of the new Teacher Development and Evaluation System.

TENURED TEACHERS RATED AS EFFECTIVE

Tenured teachers will be evaluated on a three-year cycle no later than April 5th of the year in which the evaluation is due.

The following supports are available to these teachers:

• Six (6) mini-observations each year
• Visits from a peer coach (upon request)
• Ongoing professional development opportunities
• Release time to observe other teachers

**TENURED TEACHERS RATED BELOW EFFECTIVE**

Effective teaching matters, and there must be a sense of urgency in assuring all Nashua students have the opportunity to learn from effective teachers. Therefore, any tenured teacher who is rated less than Effective (below Level 3) will be provided a limited period of time, with support, to become an effective teacher or the superintendent may not renew the teacher’s contract.

**TEACHERS RATED AT “DEVELOPING”**

A tenured teacher who receives an evaluation with an overall rating at or above Developing (Level 2) but below Effective (Level 3) will have three (3) years to improve to a level of Effective or above, as well as receive an annual evaluation by April 5th of each year. If after three years the teacher fails to receive an evaluation with a rating at or above Effective the superintendent will not renew that teacher’s contract. At the discretion of the superintendent, the teacher’s contract may be extended to a fourth (4th) year.

The teacher will receive two additional mini-observations during the three-year period (eight rather than six), and at the request of the teacher two of the mini-observations will be completed by a second observer within the building supervisory staff.

If after his/her first year the teacher fails to achieve a rating of Effective or above, the teacher shall be placed on a plan for improvement. The plan will include the same supports available to a teacher who has been rated below the Developing level (see below).

**TEACHERS RATED AT “DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS”**

A tenured teacher who receives an evaluation with an overall rating below Developing will have one (1) year to improve to a level of Developing or above, be placed on a plan for improvement, and receive an annual evaluation by April 5th of the following year. If after one (1) year the teacher fails to receive an evaluation with a rating at or above the Developing level, the superintendent will not renew that teacher’s contract. At the discretion of the superintendent, the teacher’s contract may be extended to a second year.

The teacher will receive two additional mini-observations during the year (eight rather than six), and at the request of the teacher two of the mini-observations will be completed by a second observer within the building supervisory staff.

The plan for improvement will include the supports that will be available to the teacher. These supports may include the following:

• Tailored and/or ongoing professional development opportunities
• Periodic visits and conversations with a peer coach and/or other support/administrative personnel
• Participation in after-school cohort conversations facilitated by the peer coaches
• Release time to observe other teachers
• Reading and reflecting upon specific books or articles

It will be the responsibility of the teacher to utilize the supports offered by the District.

NON-TENURED TEACHERS AND CONTINUING SUBSTITUTES

Teachers who have not yet become tenured in the Nashua School District, as well as continuing substitutes, will be evaluated each year no later than April 5th.

The following supports are provided to non-tenured teachers and continuing substitutes:

• One formal observation and four (4) mini-observations each year
• A three-day orientation prior to the beginning of the school year
• A building-based teacher mentor
• Support from a peer coach
• Participation in after-school cohort conversations facilitated by the peer coaches
• Release time to visit other teachers
• Ongoing professional development opportunities

THE EVALUATION CONFERENCE

Prior to an evaluation conference each teacher is encouraged to complete a self-evaluation using the rubric, which can be shared with the supervisor at the teacher’s option. The self-evaluation can both frame the conversation in the evaluation conference, and help identify professional development goals for the next three-year professional development process.

The evaluation conference shall include a review of 1) the mini-observations that have been recorded during the evaluation cycle; 2) discussions or conferences that have occurred around rubric domains which cannot be directly observed, and 3) the outcome of the teacher’s individual professional development process.

ESTABLISHING LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

Based on the review of evidence in the evaluation conference, the supervisor shall establish the level of the teacher’s performance on each of the 51 descriptors across the six domains of the effective teaching rubric, with one overall level of performance calculated as an average of the individual descriptors. Each of the descriptors carries equal weight in the calculation of an overall level of performance.
Provided below is an illustrative sheet summarizing the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain/Descriptor</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Doesn’t Meet Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Planning and Preparation for Learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>+49 Descriptors in between ↓↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Professional Responsibilities</td>
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<td>g. collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Effectiveness Rubric</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Performance Level</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall performance level will be based on an average score among the 51 descriptors as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does Not Meet Standards</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 – 1.5</td>
<td>1.6 - 2.7</td>
<td>2.8 - 3.5</td>
<td>&gt;3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEFAULT RATINGS WITH LIMITED SUPERVISOR OBSERVATIONS (ONE YEAR OR LESS)

There will be instances in which an administrator has only had one year (or less) in which to observe a teacher, either because the teacher is in his/her first year of employment with the District, or the teacher or administrator is new to the school. In these instances, if in the opinion of the administrator there is insufficient evidence to fully evaluate each and every descriptor, the administrator may utilize the teacher’s self-evaluation of his/her performance on specific descriptors or default to an “Effective” rating on those descriptors for tenured staff, and a “Developing” rating for non-tenured staff.

PROCESS OF NON-RENEWAL FOR TENURED TEACHERS

The first focus of the Teacher Development and Evaluation System is to support all teachers for continuous improvement, within the framework of a growth mindset. However, this system also has an accountability component that recognizes our responsibility as a public school system to assure Nashua students are being taught by effective teachers. The research is clear that effective teaching matters, and students who are taught by effective teachers are more likely to move forward on a trajectory for success in learning.

This System does require teachers who are rated less than effective to demonstrate continuous growth to become an effective teacher within a specified period of time, or the superintendent will not recommend renewal of the teacher’s contract. However, there are due process protections for a tenured teacher, and it is important for teachers to be aware of these rights.

NH RSA 189:14-a outlines the process for “Failure to be Renominated or Reelected” if a teacher has gained “tenure” within the state of New Hampshire. Among the provisions of this statute, a teacher may ask for the reason(s) for failure to be renominated or reelected and request a hearing before the
Nashua Board of Education. If aggrieved by the decision of the Board, the teacher may either petition the State Board of Education for a review or request arbitration under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement.

The Nashua School District believes every teacher can become an Effective teacher, and is committed to supporting the continuous growth of our teachers.

May 2015

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