

NORWICH FREE ACADEMY

Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support Plan



PDEC Members (2023-2024)

Jeremiah Berard, School Counselor
Colleen Caulfield, CTE/VPA Head of Department
Karen Cook, History/Social Studies Head of Department
Killeen Dziavit, English Head of Department
Brian Ewing, English Teacher
Christofer Guisti, Special Education Head of Department
Kari Howard, Social Worker
Michael Jamieson, Science Teacher
Allison Kane, History Teacher, EANFA President
Tonya Laymon, VPA Teacher

Sarah LeFrancois, Fine Arts Teacher
Sara Leisten, Science Teacher
Amy Murphy, Associate Principal
Kristin Peckrul, Director of Operations
David Sax, Special Education Supervisor
Stephanie Serrano, Math Teacher
Courtney Stewart, Math Teacher (alternative programs)
Anthony Turgeon, PE/Health Teacher
Regina Vose, Director of Multilingual Learners
Todd Zagurski, CTE Teacher

PDEC Members (2024-2025)

Jeremiah Berard, School Counselor
Brian Boorman, Paraprofessional
Colleen Caulfield, CTE/VPA Head of Department
Karen Cook, History/Social Studies Head of Department
Killeen Dziavit, English Head of Department
Brian Ewing, English Teacher
Christofer Guisti, Special Education Head of Department
Michael Jamieson, Science Teacher
Allison Kane, History Teacher, EANFA President
Tonya Laymon, VPA Teacher

Sarah LeFrancois, Fine Arts Teacher
Sara Leisten, Science Teacher
MaryAnn McComsky, Social Worker
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References

Model Plans and State Resources

- [2023-24 NFA Modifications to Teval plan](#)
- [CT Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support 2023](#)
- [Connecticut Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plans 2024](#)
- [Educator Support and Evaluation Plan \(CEA Model Plan\)](#)

Performance Standards

- [CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2017](#)
- [CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery 2017](#)
- [The Connecticut Leader Evaluation and Support Rubric 2017](#)

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Introduction

Vision

The primary goal of Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support Plan is to create a culture of learning and continuous improvement for all, a system that supports the growth and achievement of the students at Norwich Free Academy in accordance with its mission to “return to our hamlets and homes its priceless freight of youthful minds, enriched by learning, developed by a liberal culture, refined by study of all that is beautiful in nature and art, and prepared for the highest usefulness and the purest happiness.”

Guiding Principles

The design of Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support Plan is grounded in six guiding principles that use high quality professional learning to advance educator and leader practice, and subsequently, student learning, growth, and achievement:

- **Allow for differentiation of roles** for educators (teachers, service providers such as school counselors, school psychologists, social workers) and leaders (such as associate principals, deans of students, heads of department) at various stages of their careers
- **Connect to best practices aimed at the development of the whole child** including, but not limited to, academic, social, emotional, and physical development
- **Focus on practitioner growth and agency** by identifying high leverage goal focus areas that meaningfully engage professionals by focusing on growth and practice in partnership with others aligned to a strategic focus
- **Make meaningful connections to professional learning** and provide multiple pathways for participants to improve their own practice in a way that is meaningful and impactful
- **Provide timely, accurate and specific, actionable, and growth-oriented feedback**
- **Simplify** to reduce the burden of implementation

The framework for Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support Plan is anchored in the respective performance standards for effective teaching, service delivery, and leadership, and embraces the importance of the goal setting process, professional practice, educator growth and feedback. If needed, this plan also provides opportunity for additional support, intervention and dispute resolution.

Standards and Criteria

The purpose of Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support Plan is to provide all certified employees with the opportunity for continuous learning and feedback in order to develop and grow, both individually and collectively, so that all experience growth and success. The Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support Plan is adapted from the model plan adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education in concert with a wide range of stakeholders and pursuant to educator evaluation regulations ([Connecticut General Statute 10-151b](#)). This plan includes tools, guidance, and rubrics to support the evaluation of all educators and leaders.

Success of this plan will be measured by the following criteria:

- the growth and development of the leaders at Norwich Free Academy so that they are best able to support the growth and development of the educators, who in turn may develop and enhance personal and professional strengths to meet the needs of all their students; and
- the strengthening of individual pedagogy and collective practices to increase student learning, growth, and achievement at Norwich Free Academy.

- the impact the practitioners’ new learning and practice had on student learning, growth, and/or achievement, as supported by multiple and varied qualitative and quantitative indicators of evidence.

The professional growth, support and evaluation of Norwich Free Academy’s educators and leaders are based on the following performance standards:

Practitioner	Performance Standards
Educators (<i>classroom</i>)	CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2017
Educators (<i>service providers</i>)	CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery 2017
Leaders (<i>anyone working under an 092 certification, including Heads of Department</i>)	The Connecticut Leader Evaluation and Support Rubric 2017

Definition of Roles

The primary goal of Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Support Plan is to create a culture of learning and continuous improvement for all. The plan takes into consideration that educators and leaders may have varied and sometimes multiple roles as they engage in the annual cycle of continuous learning as both a participant and as a supervisor. For the ease of interpretation, the plan references practitioners and supervisors with the understanding that these terms encompass the following [definitions](#):

Practitioner	Certified personnel who engage in the Annual Continuous Learning Process. Includes both Educators and Leaders.
<i>Educator</i>	<i>A practitioner that either works in a classroom or as a service provider (school counselor, school psychologist, or social worker). Works with their Head of Department and Primary Evaluator on the goal setting process. Receives feedback on professional practice from their Head of Department and Primary Evaluator.</i>
<i>Leader</i>	<i>A practitioner that is primarily working under an 092 certification. This includes administrators and Heads of Departments. Works with their Primary Evaluator on the goal setting process. Receives feedback on professional practice from their Primary Evaluator.</i>
Supervisor	Member of the NFA Leadership team who is working under an 092 certification and supports practitioners throughout the Annual Continuous Learning Process. Includes both Complementary Observers and Primary Evaluators.
<i>Complementary Observer</i>	<i>Head of Department who works closely with members of their department(s) on the goal setting process, provides feedback on professional practice and assists the Primary Evaluator in giving feedback for the end of year summative reviews.</i>
<i>Primary Evaluator</i>	<i>Administrator who, depending on role, works closely with leaders and/or complementary observers on the annual goal setting process, provides feedback on professional practice and writes the annual summative reviews of practitioners.</i>

The Continuous Learning Process (overview)

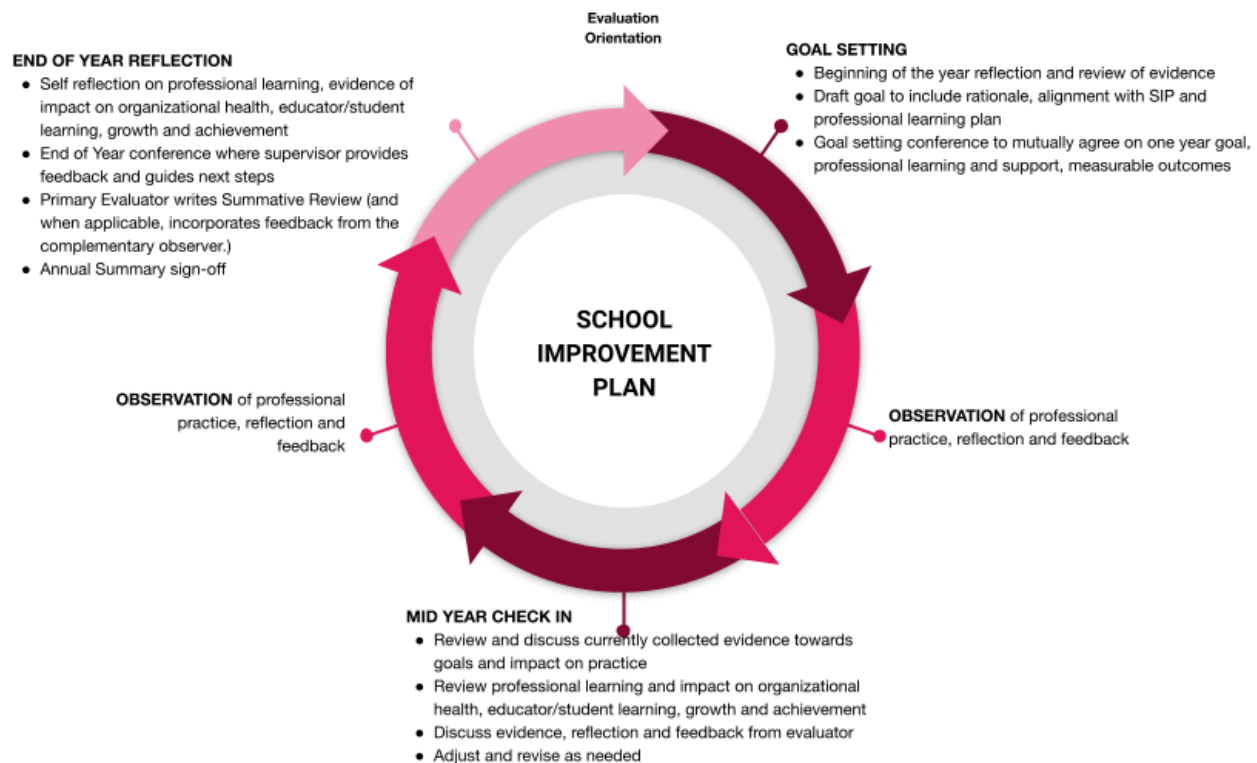
Norwich Free Academy's Educator and Leader Support Plan is designed as a continuous learning process. The goal of the continuous learning process is to provide all practitioners with continuous learning opportunities for professional growth through self-directed analysis and reflection, planning and implementation, and collaboration. Regular dialogue and feedback, coupled with the opportunity to reflect on and advance practice, drive the continuous learning process.

In this process, the practitioner is a reflective learner who actively engages in their continuous improvement. The supervisor serves as a learning partner who supports the practitioner through the learning and growth process. Together, the practitioner collaborates with their supervisor to determine mutually agreed upon goals, and reflect on professional practice, feedback and growth.

Within the continuous learning process, practitioners check in with their supervisor a minimum of three times a year (fall goal setting, midyear check in, and end-of-year reflection). These meetings provide an opportunity for the sharing of evidence of professional learning and impact on growth, and for the identification of needs and mutually agreed upon next steps. The meetings are approached in a spirit of reflection, collaboration, and continuous improvement. Dialogue is important, however, there must be a balance of written and verbal feedback provided between check ins. Depending on the practitioner's role, this feedback may be based on observations, reviews of practice, and/or additional artifacts. Effective feedback is tied to the practitioner's performance standards, and identifies strengths and areas of focus for future growth.

Annual Cycle of Continuous Learning

The implementation of the continuous learning process is shared between the practitioner and their supervisor(s). For the duration of the learning process, practitioners focus on a high leverage professional learning goal that requires engagement in professional learning, implementation of new learning, and the collection of evidence related to the impact of their learning on student outcomes. Supervisors will provide practitioners with feedback from observations, reviews of practice, engagement in professional learning and/or additional artifacts, ensure timely access to support and collect evidence of practitioner performance and practice. The graphic below provides a summary of the annual cycle. A “Year at a Glance” timeline can be found [here](#). More detailed information about the steps of the continuous learning process follows, with linked resources.



Evaluation Orientation

Annual orientation on Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support Plan will include training on high leverage goal setting and professional learning plans, the use of rubrics and standards, an explanation of observations of practice and a review of tiered supports and dispute resolution. Leaders who are also supervisors of other practitioners will receive annual training and calibration as required by [C.G.S 10-151b](#).

Goal Setting

Practitioners and their supervisor(s) mutually agree upon a high leverage professional practice one-, two- or three-year goal* and develop a plan for professional learning and support that is consistent with their professional role and status. Goals should always be connected to the practitioner’s performance standards and aligned with the

School Improvement Plan. **With mutual agreement from PDEC, for the first year of implementation (2024-25), all practitioners will develop a one-year goal.*

The practitioner will:

- [Reflect](#) and self-assess using the related performance standards:
 - [CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2017](#)
 - [CCT Rubric for Effective Service Delivery 2017](#)
 - [The Connecticut Leader Evaluation and Support Rubric 2017](#)
- Identify a high leverage goal that impacts their practice, is aligned with the School Improvement Plan and will have a positive impact on student learning, growth, and achievement at Norwich Free Academy. This goal may be done independently or in collaboration with other practitioners.
- Develop a proposed professional learning plan to build knowledge and skill.
- Complete the [professional goal setting form](#).

The practitioner shares the above with their supervisor during an initial goal setting conference that consists of dialogue around the proposed goal(s) and professional learning plan (form). During this conference, reciprocal dialogue between the practitioner and supervisor takes place to refine the proposed goal and professional learning plan as needed. In partnership, the practitioner and supervisor come to mutual agreement on a high leverage professional practice one-, two- or three-year goal*, multiple measures of evidence (at least two), professional learning plan, and support that is consistent with their professional status and goals to drive progress toward goal attainment. **With mutual agreement from PDEC, for the first year of implementation (2024-25), all practitioners will develop a one-year goal.*

Beginning educators who are required to participate in the Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program, are encouraged to align their goal and professional learning with one of the TEAM modules.

Inquiry Teams

Inquiry Teams are teams of practitioners who meet consistently to analyze student data, reflect on student progress and create action plans that will support the growth and achievement of the students at Norwich Free Academy. All practitioners will participate in regular Inquiry Team meetings and document the work of their Inquiry Team, as it relates to the action plan of their individual goal, in their annual goal setting form.

Depending on the practitioner's role, their Inquiry Team will either be a Professional Learning Community (PLC) or a Data Team.

Professional Learning Community (PLC) The purpose of the PLC is to create the time and space for practitioners to broaden their skill sets, and to support the strengthening of individual pedagogy and collective practices to increase student learning, growth, and achievement. The work in a PLC is individualized, yet it is supported and inquired upon by a whole PLC team that has the same goal: overall student success. Effective Professional Learning Communities share the following characteristics: they are collaborative, action oriented, and focus on continuous improvement and student achievement.

Data Teams The purpose of Data Teams is to create the time and space for practitioners to analyze school level data as it relates to their role. This data may be related to performance, attendance and discipline, academic achievement, and/or other data points as it relates to the professional responsibilities of the practitioner. Effective Data Teams share the following characteristics: they are collaborative, action oriented, and focus on continuous improvement and student achievement.

Observation of Professional Practice and Feedback

Observation of professional practice occurs throughout the continuous learning process. Each practitioner will have at least two observations of professional practice. The identified high leverage goal(s) provides a focus for strategic evidence collection and feedback on practice. Supervisors will provide practitioners with quality feedback based on evidence and standards, and ensure timely access to planned support(s).

Quality feedback:

- Is based on evidence and anchored in the practitioner's performance standards
- Is personalized
- Is learning-focused or growth-oriented
- Provides questions for reflection to refine or revise strategies
- Provides reflective opportunities to rework, refine, and reorder knowledge, attitudes, skills, and/or practices
- Is timely, frequent, and reciprocal

A practitioner's role and experience in that role determine both the type and the minimum [frequency](#) of the observation of professional practice.

Midyear Check In

The midyear check in consists of reciprocal dialogue between the practitioner and their immediate supervisor, and includes the practitioner's self-reflection on their progress toward their goal so far. The reflection shall include an analysis of the impact of the practitioner's learning on their practice, student learning, growth and achievement and the school community.

- Practitioners self-reflect and review multiple and varied qualitative and quantitative indicators of evidence of their professional growth, and its impact on their practice, and on student learning and achievement with their supervisor.
- The supervisor provides specific, standards-based feedback related to the practitioner's goal.
- The midyear conversation is a crucial progress check in. The midyear check in provides an opportunity to discuss evidence, learning, and next steps. Revisions to the goal or learning plan, direction to tiered support, and actionable next steps are documented by the supervisor.

End-of-Year Reflection/Summative Review

End-of-year reflection provides an opportunity for the practitioner and supervisor to engage in reciprocal dialogue, similar to the midyear check in, to discuss

1. progress toward the practitioner's goal as it relates to the practitioner's professional growth and professional practice;
2. professional learning as it relates to the practitioner's professional growth and professional practice;
3. and the strengthening of individual pedagogy and collective practices to increase student learning, growth, and achievement at Norwich Free Academy as evidenced by qualitative and quantitative indicators of evidence.

A written end-of-year reflection will include an evidence-based summary of the impact the practitioner's professional learning had on their practice, on student outcomes and on their professional growth. The reflection should also include possible next steps, and any concerns with the continuous learning process.

Analysis of evidence from the end-of-year reflection is important for the supervisor(s) subsequent completion of the end of year summative review. This summative review will:

- provide feedback using a single point rubric ([leader](#), [faculty](#), [service provider](#)) regarding the participant’s successful completion of the continuous learning process;
- include the impact of new learning on the practitioner’s practice and growth
- Identify areas of strength and focus areas for growth, and possible next steps for the upcoming year
- provide a concise summary based upon evidence related to the mutually agreed upon practitioner goal(s) and identified standards and will make a distinction regarding the practitioner’s successful completion of the professional learning process.

Growth Criteria

A practitioner is determined to have successfully completed the learning process by demonstrating:

- Reflection supported with evidence of the impact of the practitioner’s new learning on their practice/goal.
- The impact the:
 - educator’s new learning and practice had on student learning, growth, and/or achievement, supported by evidence.
 - leader's new learning and practice had on the leader’s practice, organizational growth, educator growth, and student outcomes.
- Next steps.

[Possible sources of evidence to measure professional growth](#) and impact on student learning, growth, and/or achievement, organizational health, and educator and leader growth include (but are not limited to):

Leader	Educator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information from observations of practice ● Strategic plans ● Instructional walkthroughs ● Self-reflection (e.g., journals, learning logs) ● Leader created professional learning materials ● Operational artifacts (e.g., schedules, procedural revisions) ● Educator learning outcomes ● Policy updates ● Community communications ● Constituent feedback ● Program development and implementation ● Quantitative measure of whole child development (including, but not limited to, academic, social, emotional, and physical development) ● Systems and structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required observational evidence ● Required student learning evidence aligned to high-leverage indicator focus ● Implementation plans/lesson plan(s) ● Educator learning logs/impact on practice reflection ● Educator created learning materials ● Evidence from Observation of Educator Practice ● Numeric information about schedule, time, educator practice, student participation, resource use, classroom environment, frequency of meetings/communications, etc. ● Educator and/or student self-reflection ● Student learning artifacts ● Mastery-based demonstrations of achievement ● Observational evidence of students’ words, actions, interactions ● Rubrics, interim or benchmark assessments, other assessments

Tiered Support and Corrective Support Planning

All practitioners require access to high-quality, targeted professional learning support to improve practice over time. Practitioners and their supervisor thoughtfully consider and apply three tiers of support, as appropriate, through the evaluation and support plan process. A pattern of persistent lack of growth and reflection, or resistance to growth-oriented feedback should lead to advancing levels of support. Supervisors must utilize and document all three tiers of support prior to the development of a Corrective Support Plan.

Tier 1

It is the expectation that all practitioners consistently access opportunities for professional growth. Tier 1 supports are broadly accessible professional learning opportunities for all, inclusive of, but not limited to, school and department wide professional learning opportunities, collegial conversations, observations of practice, available professional resources (e.g., books, articles, videos, etc.), formal professional learning opportunities and other supports (e.g., coaching). These resources should be identified and documented through the annual goal setting process by mutual agreement.

Tier 2

In addition to Tier 1, Tier 2 support may be more individualized and specifically targeted to concerns documented through the evaluation and support plan process. These supports are not part of a formal corrective action plan, but are designed to help a practitioner who is showing an early pattern of concerns. Tier 2 support should be provided after a conversation between the practitioner and their supervisor. These informal supports may include attending a workshop related to a specific concern, observation of professional practices, coaching, a review of practice, conferences with the Head of Department and/or Primary Evaluator, among other agreed upon options. Tier 2 support should be clearly documented in the feedback provided to the practitioner.

Tier 3

Tier 3 supports are responsive to previously documented concerns that have persisted despite Tier 1 and 2 support. Tier 3 supports are more intensive and are assigned by a Primary Evaluator in consultation with the practitioner, the Head of Department (as applicable) and the collective bargaining unit (as applicable). If concerns remain unresolved over a defined period despite all three tiers of support, movement to a formal corrective support plan may be appropriate.

Corrective Support Plan

A pattern of persistent lack of growth and reflection or resistance to growth-oriented feedback should lead to advancing, tiered levels of support prior to placing a practitioner on a Corrective Support Plan. A Corrective Support Plan may be developed and implemented for:

- Any practitioner with an ongoing pattern of performance concerns that have been documented over time in the feedback to the practitioner and summarized in their end-of-year summative review, which should indicate an unsuccessful completion of the annual process.
- There must also be documentation that shows the Primary Evaluator provided tiered support to informally help the practitioner improve on areas of concern prior to considering a formal corrective action plan.

The Corrective Support Plan shall be developed in consultation with the practitioner and their Primary Evaluator, their Head of Department (as applicable) and their bargaining representative (as applicable) pursuant to [C.G.S. §10-153b](#). When placing a practitioner on a Corrective Support Plan, the following steps should be followed:

- The practitioner, collective bargaining representative (as applicable), Head of Department (as applicable) and Primary Evaluator meet to develop a plan at a mutually agreed upon time. In addition to a collective bargaining representative, the practitioner may choose to include another trusted individual(s) with knowledge of their practice such as a TEAM mentor, department head, or colleague.
- Expectations should be specific to the documented area of concern, and aligned to the practitioner's performance standards.
- The plan should not be overwhelming in scope and should focus narrowly on achievable goals with a defined timeframe for implementation.
- The supportive actions of the Primary Evaluator and Head of Department (as applicable) should be defined.
- The supports provided should be aligned with expectations and feedback provided at every step.
- The plan should be documented using [this form](#).

At the conclusion of the Corrective Support Plan period, a number of outcomes are possible as determined in consultation with the Primary Evaluator, Head of Department (as applicable), practitioner and bargaining unit representative (as applicable).

Dispute Resolution

The purpose of the dispute resolution process is to secure at the lowest possible administrative level equitable solutions to disagreements, which from time to time may arise related to the evaluation and support process. The right of appeal is available to all in the evaluation and support system. As our evaluation and support system is designed to ensure continuous, constructive and cooperative processes among professional educators, educators/leaders and their supervisors are encouraged to resolve disagreements informally.

Ultimately, should a participant disagree with the supervisor's assessment and feedback, the parties are encouraged to discuss these differences and seek common understanding of the issues. As a result of these discussions, the supervisor may choose to adjust the report but is not obligated to do so. The practitioner being evaluated has the right to provide a statement identifying areas of concern with the goals/ objectives, evaluation period, feedback, and/or professional development plan, which may include the individual professional learning plan or a Corrective Support Plan.

Any such matters will be handled as expeditiously as possible, and in no instance will a decision exceed thirty (30) workdays from the date the participant initiated the dispute resolution process. Confidentiality throughout the resolution process shall be conducted in accordance with the law.

Process

The participant shall be entitled to collective bargaining representation (when applicable) at all levels of the process.

1. Within three school days of articulating the dispute in writing to their supervisor, the practitioner being evaluated and the supervisor will meet with the objective of resolving the matter informally.
2. If there has been no resolution, the individual may choose to continue the dispute resolution process in writing to the superintendent or designee within three workdays of the meeting with their supervisor (step 1). The participant being evaluated may request that the superintendent or designee solely arbitrate the issue in dispute. In this case, the superintendent or designee will review all applicable documentation and meet with both parties (practitioner and their supervisor) as soon as possible, but no longer than five school days from the date of the written communication to the superintendent. The superintendent or designee will act as arbitrator and make a final decision, which shall be binding.

Time Limits

1. Since it is important that appeals be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated within this plan shall be considered maximum. The time limits specified may be extended by written agreement of both parties.
2. Days shall mean workdays. Both parties may agree, however, to meet during breaks at mutually agreed upon times.
3. The practitioner must initiate the appeals procedure within five workdays of the scheduled meeting in which the feedback was presented. If no written initiation of a dispute is received by the supervisor within five workdays, the practitioner shall be considered to have waived the right of appeal.
4. The practitioner must initiate each level of the appeal process within the number of days indicated. The absence of a written appeal at any subsequent level shall be considered as waiving the right to appeal further.

Any claims that the district has failed to follow the established procedures of the Leader and Teacher Evaluation and Support Plan shall be subject to the grievance procedures set forth in the current collective bargaining agreements (when applicable) between the NFA Board of Trustees and the relevant bargaining unit.

The Role of the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC)

Norwich Free Academy’s Educator and Leader Support Plan is designed to create and support a culture of learning and continuous improvement for and encourage the ownership of professional learning and growth by its participants. The implementation of this plan requires a strong PDEC composed of educators, leaders and paraprofessionals. The PDEC will annually update the Educator and Leader Support Plan and gather input from participants and supervisors to inform the plan’s revision and the development of professional learning opportunities to support the plan's implementation. The PDEC will meet quarterly, at times established at the onset of the school year.

Local and State Reporting

The superintendent shall report:

1. the status of teacher evaluations to the local or regional board of education on or before June 1 of each year; and
2. the status of the implementation of the teacher evaluation and support program, including the frequency of evaluations, the number of teachers who have not been evaluated, and other requirements as determined by the Department of Education, to the Commissioner of Education on or before September 15 of each year.

For purposes of this section, the term “teacher” shall include each professional employee of the Board of Trustees, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

Forms and Documentation

Document Links	Location
Definition of Roles	Page 2
Year at a Glance	Page 4
Reflection Questions for Continuous Improvement Process	Page 5
Professional Goal Setting Form	Page 5
Observation Frequency	Page 6
Possible sources of evidence to measure growth	Page 7
Summative Feedback Forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader • educator/faculty • educator/service provider 	Page 7
Corrective Support Plan Form	Page 9