RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND EVALUATION PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

In 2023, the State of Connecticut revised their guidelines for district evaluation plans. As a result, the Ridgefield Public Schools' Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) was tasked with redesigning Ridgefield's evaluation procedures and methodologies. Ridgefield's Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan is rooted in the belief that the best way to promote the growth and well-being of students is to support and encourage the growth and well-being of educators.

SECTION I: THE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND EVALUATION PLAN

The Ridgefield Public School district is committed to utilizing an educator evaluation plan that is based on the belief that successful learning and effective teaching are supported by a meaningful system of professional development. In keeping with this philosophy, the Ridgefield Professional Development and Evaluation Committee has developed the Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan. The committee is made up of dedicated professionals from all levels and includes representation from the NEA-Ridgefield and the Ridgefield Administrator's Association and a paraeducator.

Name:	School:	Position:
Laus, Becky	BMES	Administrator
Dewing, Karen (Co-chair)	CO	Director of Personnel
Gillette, Cory (Co-chair)	CO	Assistant Superintendent
Hannaway, Elizabeth	CO	Assistant Superintendent
Grace, Tom	ERMS	Administrator
Reiss, Elizabeth	ERMS	Educator
Cody, Amanda	FES	Educator
Hougasian, Michael	NEA-R	NEA-R/Educator
Karlan, Elizabeth (Co-chair)	NEA-R	NEA-R/Educator
Kehoe, Sarah	NEA-R	NEA-R/Educator
Ippoliti, Erica	RES	Educator
Anton, Steven	RHS	Educator
Helmes, Molly	RHS	Educator
Yagid, Michael	RHS	Administrator
White, Laura	SES	Educator
Blau, Linda	SRMS	Paraeducator
Bray, Jennifer	SRMS	Educator
Dunne, Ryan	VPES	Educator
Prendergast, Sheri	VPES	Administrator

A. RIDGEFIELD'S PDEC MISSION STATEMENT

Effective educators have a transformative impact on student success. The Ridgefield Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan is designed to enhance student performance through continuous professional growth. It is a comprehensive, research-based plan that supports professional competence within a system that establishes high expectations for educator effectiveness.

At the heart of every successful evaluation and professional development plan there must be a means for:
- developing, encouraging and maintaining areas of strength,
- promoting ongoing professional growth
- identifying and correcting areas of weakness, and
- terminating ineffective educators.

B. PDEC NORMS

Ridgefield's PDEC uses consensus protocol to make mutually agreed upon decisions. Consensus protocol dictates that when it is time for the PDEC to make an important decision, each PDEC member rates their level of agreement using the chart below. If every PDEC member is at least a 4, the decision can be considered mutually agreed upon. If even one person is below a 4, however, there is no agreement, and discussion and compromise should continue. If sincere and repeated efforts to reach mutual agreement fail, the co-chairs of the PDEC may average all the votes, and if the average is a 4, the decision may be considered agreed upon.

5	I'm in total support of this.
4	I can support this despite minor reservations.
3	I need more information before I can support this.
2	I am unlikely to support this without changes.
1	I veto this.

The goal of Ridgefield's PDEC is to promote trust and co-ownership of teaching and learning within the Ridgefield Public School district. By statute, PDECs create and annually update their district's educator evaluation plan and its professional development plan. Members of the PDEC collaboratively create operating norms and establish an agreed upon protocol for achieving mutual agreement/consensus as discussed above.

C. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

People in any field improve by honestly evaluating their current performance together with their colleagues, setting clear goals for the future, and figuring out what support they need to reach those goals.

In Ridgefield Public Schools, this process is built into the system. Educators and their evaluators will work together to identify areas where the educator can improve. These areas will be the foundation for ongoing discussions about the educator's teaching methods and how they affect student learning.

The support offered should be tailored to our educator's strengths and weaknesses. The district can then address these common needs by offering professional development programs for the entire school.

Every year, the district will look at data from various sources, including the entire district, individual schools, educators, and students. This data will be used to create professional development opportunities that meet the specific needs of different groups. The PDEC will work to create and plan responsive and worthwhile professional development for Ridgefield Public School educators.

SECTION II: EDUCATOR GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS

A. ANNUAL TIMELINE

The Ridgefield Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan is rooted in an annual timeline designed to promote ongoing dialogue between educators and evaluators and offer regular opportunities for progress check-ins. Annual conferences are also required by Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation. Dialogue through the professional growth process begins with self-reflection/self assessment about the impact of professional learning and leadership practice on organizational health/educator practice on student growth, and identification of next steps.

Goal Setting Conference	Mid-Year Check-In	Summative Conference
● Self-reflect ● Draft goal, discuss rationale, alignment, and possible professional learning plan ● Discuss possible evidence of progress ● Mutually agree on 1-, 2-, or 3-year goal (as determined by tenure status) ● Determine individual or group goal(s) ● Mutually agree on professional learning needs and support	● Reflect on progress towards goal, adjustments, and next steps ● Review and discuss currently collected evidence of progress towards goal ● Review professional learning, evidence, and impact on educator practice, student learning, growth, and achievement ● Discuss evidence, reflection, and feedback from evaluator ● Adjust and revise as needed	● Reflect and review on the goal and evidence of progress ● Discuss possible next steps or continuation of goal into next school year if relevant. ● Discuss professional learning insights, impact on practice, student learning, growth and achievement ● After the conference, evaluator provides written summative feedback and suggests next steps based on the conference and educator signs off

B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PRIMARY EVALUATORS

All educators shall be assigned a primary evaluator (092 or 093). The building principal or assistant principal shall be the primary evaluator for all regularly assigned staff members. By September 15th of each school year, educators at the secondary level will be notified of the individual who will serve as the primary evaluator. Itinerant educators or those who are assigned to more than one building shall be assigned an evaluator by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

SECONDARY EVALUATORS

The Assistant Superintendent of Special Services and/or Assistant Director of Special Education may be the secondary evaluator of all pupil personnel and special education staff. Certified Central Office administrators, including the Director of Elementary Education, the 6-12 Math/Science Supervisor, or the 6-12 Humanities Supervisor will co-observe non-tenured teachers at least once prior to attainment of tenure and may observe tenured educators as part of the evaluation process.

COMPLEMENTARY OBSERVATION

Department chairpersons may assist primary evaluators by conducting observations, collecting additional evidence, reviewing progress toward goals, and providing additional feedback. A Department chairperson should share his or her feedback with the primary evaluator as it is collected and shared with educators. Department chairpersons at 9-12 are obligated to conduct at least one observation of the educators assigned to their respective departments; 6-12 Department chairpersons may observe their educators assigned to their respective departments. They may observe tenured educators in their department as part of the evaluation process.

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION OF EVALUATORS

All types of evaluators will receive training on the components of this plan. Orientations will incorporate training and support in all elements of the plan. These include high-leverage goal setting, professional learning plans, calibration of teaching and feedback learning walks in schools, understanding the three tiers of support, the corrective support plan, and practice using rubrics and standards. Additionally, ongoing support for evaluators will be provided in the area of giving high-leverage and relevant informal and formal feedback. In conclusion, support for evaluators will encompass both building an understanding of the components of the plan and developing the coaching skills necessary to support educators' growth and practice to impact student growth.

FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING TEACHING

The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT) — Foundational Skills (1999), revised and adopted by the State Board of Education in February 2010, establishes a vision for teaching and learning in Connecticut Public Schools. State law and regulations link the CCT to various professional requirements that span an educator's career, including preparation, induction and educator evaluation and support. These teaching standards identify the foundational skills and competencies that pertain to all educators, regardless of the subject matter, field or age group

they teach. The standards articulate the knowledge, skills and qualities that Connecticut educators need to prepare students to meet 21st-century challenges to succeed in college, career and life. The philosophy behind the CCT is that teaching requires more than simply demonstrating a certain set of technical skills. As stipulated by the Connecticut State Department of Education, these competencies have long been established as the standards expected of all Connecticut educators.

The CCT identifies four domains:
- **Domain 1:** Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning
- **Domain 2:** Planning for Active Learning
- **Domain 3:** Instruction for Active Learning
- **Domain 4:** Professional Responsibilities and Educator Leadership

CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2017 — At a Glance

Evidence Generally Collected Through **In-Class Observations**	Evidence Generally Collected Through **Non-Classroom/Reviews of Practice**
▶ Domain 1: Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning	▶ Domain 2: Planning for Active Learning
Teachers promote student engagement, independence and interdependence in learning and facilitate a positive learning community by: 1a. Creating a positive learning environment that is responsive to and respectful of the learning needs of all students. 1b. Promoting developmentally appropriate standards of behavior that support a productive learning environment for all students. 1c. Maximizing instructional time by effectively managing routines and transitions.	*Teachers plan instruction to engage students in rigorous and relevant learning and to promote their curiosity about the world at large by:* 2a. Planning of instructional content that is aligned with standards, builds on students' prior knowledge and provides for appropriate level of challenge for all students. 2b. Planning instruction to cognitively engage students in the content. 2c. Selecting appropriate assessment strategies to monitor student progress.
▶ Domain 3: Instruction for Active Learning	▶ Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership
Teachers implement instruction to engage students in rigorous and relevant learning and to promote their curiosity about the world at large by: 3a. Implementing instructional content for learning. 3b. Leading students to construct meaning and apply new learning through the use of a variety of differentiated and evidence-based learning strategies. 3c. Assessing student learning, providing feedback to students and adjusting instruction.	*Teachers maximize support for student learning by developing and demonstrating professionalism, collaboration and leadership by:* 4a. Engaging in continuous professional learning to impact instruction and student learning. 4b. Collaborating to develop and sustain a professional learning environment to support student learning. 4c. Working with colleagues, students and families to develop and sustain a positive school climate that supports student learning.

From the state's framework Ridgefield Public Schools has specifically identified the following **eight indicators** as crucial aspects for educators and service providers to focus on in their evaluations.

RPS Rubric for Effective Teaching & Service Delivery 2017 - At a Glance

Domain 1: Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning	Domain 2: Planning for Active Learning
• 1a. Creating a positive learning environment that is responsive to and respectful of the learning needs of all students. • 1b. Promoting developmentally appropriate standards of behavior that support a productive learning environment for all students.	• 2a. Planning of instructional content that is aligned with standards, builds on students' prior knowledge and provides for an appropriate level of challenge for all students. • 2b. Planning instruction to cognitively engage students in the content.
Domain 3: Instruction for Active Learning	Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities and Educator Leadership
• 3b. Leading students to construct meaning and apply new learning through the use of a variety of differentiated and evidence-based learning strategies. • 3c. Assessing student learning, providing feedback to students and adjusting instruction.	• 4a. Engaging in continuous professional learning to impact instruction and student learning. • 4c. Working with colleagues, students and families to develop and sustain a positive school climate that supports student learning.** For midyear and EOY evaluations

SINGLE POINT COMPETENCY

The Ridgefield Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan utilizes single-point competency rubrics. A single-point competency is a description of a standard of behavior or performance that represents the enduring understanding of content and skill from a specific domain that is framed only as a single set of desired outcomes rather than laid out across a rating or scale of performance. The goal of engaging with these rubrics is to focus educators and evaluators on clear benchmarks for proficiency in performance while allowing for individualized feedback on areas that exceed or fall short of expectations. Single-point competency rubrics form the foundation for discussion in pre- and post-observation meetings and allow evaluators and educators to focus on growth instead of a rating or score.

RPS RUBRICS

- [RPS Simplified CCT - Classroom Educators](#)
- [RPS Simplified CCT - School Counselors](#)
- [RPS Simplified CCT - Service Providers](#)
- [RPS Simplified CCT - School Psychologists](#)

C. EDUCATOR PRACTICE

The Ridgefield Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan is differentiated for educators in different roles and stages of their careers. Classroom educators are observed using a single-point competency rubric based on a streamlined version of Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT), which can be found linked above. Educators who do not provide instruction in classroom settings, such as school counselors, content area coaches, and others, should use the rubric for their respective positions based on a simplified version of the CCT for Effective Service Delivery, found linked above. In addition, the number and type of observations required differ depending on the educator's role and tenure level.

Evaluation Timeline at a Glance:

Educator Tenure Status	Minimum Number of Scheduled Observations	Minimum Number of Unscheduled Observations	Observation Deadlines	Goal Setting Conference Deadline (Goal Submission Deadline)	Mid-Year Conference Deadline	End-of-Year Summative Conference Deadline
Non-Tenured	2	1	First: Oct 31st Second: Dec 15th Third: Mar 1st	Oct 15th (Oct 31st)	Feb 15th	Five days prior to the end of school
Tenured	--	2	First: Jan 15th Second: May 1st	Oct 15th (Oct 31st)	Feb 15th	Five days prior to the end of school

OBSERVATIONS

Non-Tenured Educators:	Tenured Educators:

A minimum of three annual observations.
● Two scheduled observations with pre and post-conferences.
 	
● One unscheduled observation with post-conference.
 	
● Additional observations (scheduled or unscheduled) may be completed to provide a comprehensive understanding of educator performance.
 	
● Timeline for Observations
  ○ First: October 31st
  ○ Second: December 15th
  ○ Third: March 1st
	A minimum of two annual observations.
	● Two unscheduled observations with post-conference.
	  ○ One of the two unscheduled observations may be a review of practice.
	  ○ A pre-observation may be included with one or both of the observations at the request of the educator and/or evaluator if concerns are documented.
	
	● Additional observations (scheduled or unscheduled) may be completed to provide a comprehensive understanding of educator performance.
	
	● Timeline for Observations
	  ○ First: January 15th
	  ○ Second: May 1st

Observation Requirements:
- Scheduled observations include a pre- and post-observation conference and are scheduled in advance by the evaluator.
- Both scheduled and unscheduled observations will be followed by written feedback within ten school days of the post-observation conference.
- A review of practice observation may include activities outside of a classroom and as well as a concert, art show, review of artifacts, or PD facilitation, among other options. A review of practice observation should be mutually agreed upon by the evaluator and the educator.

PRE-OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

Prior to (recommended within two (2) school days of) the scheduled observation, the evaluator and the educator meet to discuss the upcoming lesson.

The educator shall come to the pre-observation conference prepared to discuss:
- the completed Pre-Observation form
- any other related documents and/or materials that may be helpful in understanding the intent of the lesson.

If the discussion in the pre-observation conference suggests that a substantive modification to the lesson is needed, adequate time (approximately one to two days) should be allowed for the educator to re-plan the lesson. A second pre-observation conference may be held to discuss the revised lesson plan.

POST-OBSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

Within five (5) school days of the lesson observation, a post-observation conference shall be held between the evaluator and educator to verbally discuss the effectiveness of the lesson and *is tied to standards, identifies strengths and areas of focus for advancement.* Using evidence from the observation, both the evaluator and the educator shall use the CCT Single-point competencies to assess the lesson. The educator utilizes the Post-Observation Form to document their thinking.

The purposes of the post-observation conference includes:
- provide opportunities for self-reflection
- review the observation report/s of the lesson/s with a focus on student learning
- reinforce the strengths of the teaching performance and identify areas for improvement
- offer specific feedback on classroom management
- direct the educator toward relevant professional development opportunities
- Feedback that consists of multiple and varied quantitative and qualitative indicators of professional growth

A written observation report will be provided within ten (10) school days) following the post-observation conference, the observer completes the written evaluation of the lesson, using the Educator Observation Form. Within five (5) school days of receipt of the observation report, the educator shall sign and return the report. The educator shall be given the opportunity to provide comments or reflections if desired. The signed observation report will be maintained in the educator's evaluation file.

UNSCHEDULED OBSERVATIONS

Unscheduled observations are unannounced and are documented using the Educator Observation Form. Relevant data collected from these visits should be used in the evaluator's year-end assessment of educator performance. Post-observation conferences and written observation reports are required for unscheduled observations. When additional unscheduled observations occur as part of an educator's Structured Support plan, this requirement may be adjusted.

REVIEW OF PRACTICE

As our evaluation model aims to provide educators with comprehensive feedback on their practice as defined by the four domains of the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching, all interactions with educators that are relevant to their instructional practice and professional conduct may contribute to their performance evaluations. These interactions may include but are not limited to, reviews of lesson/unit plans and assessments, planning meetings, data team meetings, professional learning community meetings, call logs or notes from parent-educator meetings, observations of coaching/mentoring other educators, and attendance records from professional development or school-based activities/events.

D. EDUCATOR GROWTH GOALS

Multiple measures of student learning, student and educator growth, and achievement are noted as mutually agreed upon during the goal-setting process. Educator growth goals (professional growth goals) are based on the idea that educators are always learning and improving. These goals should be designed by the educator to target a desired area focus that is directly related to one of the eight CCT indicators selected by RPS. This SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) goal will help educators and evaluators focus on areas of growth throughout the annual evaluation process.

MUTUAL AGREEMENT

Each educator and their assigned evaluator must mutually agree on one (1) professional growth goal and at least two (2) associated evidence of progress, needs to include multiple measures during the goal setting process, as mutually agreed upon by the educator and evaluator. The professional growth goal must be aligned with the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT) and mutually agreed upon between the educator and their primary evaluator. Evidence of progress (or indicators of educator growth) are ways the educator can demonstrate progress toward their goal which includes student learning, student and educator growth and achievement. and may include, but not be limited to, a sample of lesson plans, a sample of student artifacts, newly developed performance assessments, and educator and/or student self-reflections.

NON-TENURED EDUCATOR

Non-tenured educators are required to set one professional growth goal each year, and, if required to complete TEAM, non-tenured educators are encouraged to align their goal with one of the TEAM modules. Non-tenured educators may also set collaborative goals that are non-TEAM related if this is mutually agreed upon.

TENURED EDUCATORS

Tenured educators are permitted to set one professional growth goal that spans from 1 to 3 years in duration. This goal may be collaborative and may be adjusted as needed each year.

- For Sample Goals and Indicators, click HERE.
- For the Goal Setting Meeting Form, click HERE.
- CCT Rubric for Educators, click HERE

- CCT Rubric for Service Providers, click HERE

E. THE SUMMATIVE NARRATIVE REPORT

The Ridgefield Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan includes an annual summative conference and narrative report reviewing the goal and evidence of progress, summarizing areas of growth, next steps for the following year, and an indication of successful completion of the annual process. Multiple pieces of evidence as part of the educator feedback process, may include artifacts, observations of practice, student feedback, and reflections of the educator on student growth as part of the feedback process. Educator self-reflection on professional growth and its impact on students is imperative to this process and included in the Educator Summative Form.

This summative process should celebrate the educator's accomplishments as well as identify specific action steps to guide and support the educator's ongoing growth the following school year. To comply with state requirements, the summary narrative report must also include a box indicating the successful completion of the annual growth and support process.

The purpose of the summative process is not to provide a rating or to indicate whether the educator has "passed" or "failed." The purpose is to document and celebrate the growth the educator has made over the course of the year and provide an opportunity for the educator and evaluator to reflect on specific ways to build on this growth the following year. ***The Self Reflection and Annual Summary are based on agreed upon standards and goals.***

F. DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Ridgefield Public Schools utilize TalentEd for its educator evaluation plans. TalentEd is a web-based management system specifically designed for K-12 educators. Using this online tool will improve efficiencies in the observation and evaluation process while reducing paperwork, simplifying record keeping and minimizing costs.

TalentEd includes all the necessary forms to complete the evaluation process (Goal Setting form, pre- and post-observation forms, observation rubrics, summative evaluations, etc.). TalentEd has been customized to include Ridgefield's observation rubrics with the eight selected indicators from the CCT Framework (see FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING TEACHING).

GUIDANCE ON ENTRY OF DATA AND ACCESSIBILITY

1. Limit entry only to artifacts, information and data that is specifically identified in an educator or administrator's evaluation plan as an indicator to be used for evaluating such educators, and to optional artifacts as mutually agreed upon by educator/administrator and evaluator.
2. Prohibit the State Department of Education from accessing identifiable student data in TalentEd except as needed to conduct the audits mandated by C.G.S. 10-151(c) and 10-151i and ensure that third-party organizations keep all identifiable student data confidential.
3. Prohibit the sharing or transference of all individual educator data from one district to another or to any other entity without the educator's or administrator's consent, as required by law.

4. Limit the access of educator or administrator data to only the primary evaluator, superintendent or his/her designee, and to other designated professionals directly involved in evaluation and professional development processes. Consistent with Connecticut General Statutes, this does not affect the SDE's data collection authority.
5. Include a process for logging the names of authorized individuals who access an educator's or administrator's evaluation information.

SECTION III: LEVELED SUPPORT AND STRUCTURED SUPPORT PLAN

A. LEVELED SUPPORTS

All educators require access to high-quality, targeted professional learning support to improve practice over time and receive appropriate Level 1 support. Ridgefield Public Schools works to continually support and grow all educators. During the educator evaluation process, if it's identified that an educator needs additional support, this will be clearly documented and communicated to them. The educator must be represented by his/her exclusive bargaining representative at a Structured Support Plan meeting; a documented refusal to have bargaining representation included in the development of the support plan must be submitted in writing to the primary evaluator.

Level 1 - General Support
Level 1 supports are broadly accessible to all educators. Level 1 supports can include, but not limited to, collegial professional conversations, classroom visits, available district resources (e.g., books, articles, videos etc.), formal professional learning opportunities developed and designed by district PDEC, and other general support for all educators (e.g., instructional coaching). Prior to transitioning to Level 2 supports, the Level 1 supports will be documented and reviewed between the educator and the evaluator. These resources and timelines should be identified in collaboration with the educator and or recommended by an evaluator.

Level 2 - Targeted Support
In addition to Level 1, Level 2 supports are more intensive in duration, frequency, and focus (e.g., engaging in a professional learning opportunity, observation of specific classroom practices, meetings with department leaders, secondary observers, etc.) that can be either suggested by the educator and/or recommended by an evaluator. Prior to transitioning to Level 3 supports, the Level 2 supports will be documented and reviewed between the educator and the evaluator.

Level 3 - Intensive Support
In addition to Level 1 and Level 2, Level 3 supports are responsive to unresolved, previously discussed concerns and are developed in collaboration with the educator and may be assigned by the evaluator. Level 3 supports have clearly articulated areas of focus, duration of time, and criteria for success. Level 3 supports shall be developed in consultation with the evaluator, educator, and their exclusive bargaining representative for certified educators chosen pursuant to C.G.S. §10-153b. Prior to transitioning to a Structured Support Plan, the Level 3 supports will be documented and reviewed with the educator and the evaluator. The start date and duration of time an educator is receiving this level of support should be clearly documented.

B. STRUCTURED SUPPORT PLAN

A pattern of persistent lack of growth and reflection or resistance to growth-oriented feedback should lead to support with a defined process for placing an educator on a Structured Support Plan with indicators of success for transitioning out of it. Evaluators must utilize and document all three levels of support prior to the development of a Structured Support Plan and communicate the plan to the educator. The Structured Support Plan must be developed in consultation with the educator and their exclusive bargaining representative for certified teachers chosen pursuant to C.G.S. §10-153b. A documented refusal to have bargaining representation included in the development of the support plan must be submitted in writing to the primary evaluator.

The Structured Support Plan is separate from the normal educator growth model and must contain:

- clear objectives specific to the well-documented area of concern
- resources, support, and interventions to address the area of concern
- well-defined timeframes for implementing the resources, support, and interventions
- supportive actions from the evaluator

All parts of the plan will be reviewed and discussed between the educator and their evaluator and may include multiple follow-up meetings as determined by the evaluator. The educator shall come to meetings prepared to discuss their progress towards meeting the expectations for improvement. These meetings will determine whether:

1. Area(s) of concern or deficiency still exist(s). If so, one of the following will occur:
   a. An extension of the terms and time limits of the plan if the previously identified deficiency continues
   b. A revision of the Structured Support Plan to include other suggestions for improvement, if new concerns are identified
   c. A recommendation for disciplinary action or documentation
   d. A recommendation for termination of employment.
2. The area(s) of concern or deficiency has been resolved and the structured support may be continued for up to one year to monitor the educator's ability to sustain such improvement.
3. The area(s) of concern or deficiency has been resolved and maintained for up to one year and the structured support is no longer needed.

A record of the Structured Support process, including the support plan, summaries of conferences, and overall outcome of the Structured Support process, shall be prepared in triplicate and signed by the educator and the evaluator. One copy will be for the educator's records, one for the evaluator's records; the final copy will be sent to the Personnel Office for the educator's personnel files. At the conclusion of the Structured Support Plan period, a number of outcomes are possible as determined in consultation with the evaluator, educator and bargaining unit representative.

Non-Tenured Educators:

If an evaluator has identified an area of concern for a non-tenured educator, the educator will collaborate with the primary evaluator to make a good-faith effort to address these issues. This effort may include a written Structured Support Plan to improve performance. The decision to recommend to the Board of Education to non-renew a non-tenured educator's contract rests solely with the Superintendent and is not contingent upon completion of a Structured Support Plan.

B. DISMISSAL/CONTRACT NON-RENEWAL

The intent of the RPS Structured Support Plan is to provide educators with the support and guidance to enable educators to meet the standards of Ridgefield Public Schools. This process of intervention does not preclude the Board of Education from dismissing the educator during the first 90 calendar days of employment, or taking disciplinary action (including termination of employment) against an educator if the educator has violated any policy of the Board of Education or if the educator is not performing satisfactorily after being placed on a Structured Support Plan.

SECTION IV: 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 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 evaluators are encouraged to resolve disagreements informally.

Ultimately, should an educator disagree with the evaluator'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 evaluator may choose to adjust the report but is not obligated to do so. The educator 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 Structured Support Plan. Any such matters will be handled as expeditiously as possible, and in no instance will a decision exceed 30 workdays from the date the educator initiated the dispute resolution process. Confidentiality throughout the resolution process shall be conducted in accordance with the law. Claims that the district has failed to follow the established procedures of the evaluation and support program shall be subject to the current collective bargaining organization.

Process

The educator being evaluated shall be entitled to collective bargaining representation at all levels of the process.

1. Within five school days of articulating the dispute in writing to his/her/their evaluator, the educator being evaluated and the evaluator 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 his/her/their evaluator (step 1).
   a. The issue in dispute may be referred for resolution to a subcommittee of the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC), which will serve as a neutral party.

The Superintendent shall be the final decision-maker if a resolution cannot be reached in a dispute with the evaluation procedures.

SECTION V: APPENDIX

1. **Goal Setting Forms**

   a. RPS Educator Goal Setting Form

2. **RPS Rubrics**

   a. Simplified CCT - Classroom Educator Rubric

   b. Simplified CCT - Service Providers

   c. Simplified CCT - School Psychologists

   d. Simplified CCT - School Counselors

3. **Observation Forms**

   a. Pre-Observation Form

   b. Post Observation Form

4. **Meeting Forms**

   a. Evaluator Midyear Form

   b. Evaluator Summative Form

5. **Structured Support Plan**

   a. Sample Structured Support Plan

RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

LEADER PROFESSIONAL GROWTH & EVALUATION PLAN

Approved by Ridgefield Board of Education November 12, 2024.

This document is adapted from the CSDE and the CEA Leader Evaluation and Support Plans

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INTRODUCTION

In 2023, the State of Connecticut revised their guidelines for district evaluation plans. As a result, the Ridgefield Public Schools Administrator Evaluation Committee was tasked with redesigning Ridgefield's evaluation procedures and methodologies. Ridgefield's Administrator Evaluation Committee's focus is rooted in the belief that the best way to promote the growth and well-being of students is to support and encourage the growth and well-being of leaders.

THE RIDGEFIELD ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Name:	School:	Position:
Dr. Susie Da Silva	District	Superintendent of Schools
Karen Dewing	District	Director of Personnel
Cory Gillette	District	Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Tom Grace	East Ridge Middle School	Assistant Principal
Dr. Jake Greenwood	Ridgefield High School	Principal
Timothy Luchsinger	Scotland Elementary School	Assistant Principal
Keith Margolus	Branchville Elementary School	Principal
Timothy Salem	Scotts Ridge Middle School	Principal
Dr. Annie Tucci	District	6-12 Humanities Supervisor

ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION COMMITTEE NORMS

Ridgefield's Administrator Evaluation Committee uses consensus protocol to make mutually agreed upon decisions. Consensus protocol dictates that when it is time to make an important decision, each member should rate their level of agreement using the chart below. If every member is at least a 4, the decision can be considered mutually agreed upon. If even one person is below a 4, however, there is no agreement, and discussion and compromise should continue. If sincere and repeated efforts to reach mutual agreement fail, the co-chairs of the Committee may average all the votes, and if the average is a 4, the decision may be considered agreed upon.

5	I'm in total support of this.
4	I can support this despite minor reservations.
3	I need more information before I can support this.
2	I am unlikely to support this without changes.
1	I veto this.

ADMINISTRATOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND EVALUATION COMPONENTS

ANNUAL TIMELINE

The Ridgefield Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan for administrators follows the same basic timeline as the educator plan and is intended to foster ongoing dialogue between administrators and their evaluator(s). The timeline offers regular opportunities for progress check-ins as required by Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation.

Goal Setting Completed by October 15	Mid-year Check-in Completed by March 1	End-of-Year Reflection Completed by June 30
Beginning of the Year Goal Setting and Planning • Share goals (Building and Personal) • Discuss evidence to be used to support goal • Mutually agree on professional learning needs and support	**Mid-Year Check-in: Reflection, Adjustments, and Next Steps** • Review, revise and discuss progress towards goals • Discuss evidence, reflection, and feedback from evaluator • Discuss feedback on overall performance	**End-of-Year Reflection and Feedback Process** • Reflect on goals, evidence and next steps • Discuss draft goals for the following year • Evaluator provides written summary of feedback

FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING LEADERSHIP

Leadership practice is described in the Common Core of Leading (CCL), Connecticut School Leadership Standards adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education in June of 2012, which use the National Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards as their foundation and define effective administrative practice through six performance expectations:

- **Vision, Mission and Goals** - Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by guiding the development and implementation of a shared vision of learning, a strong organizational mission and high expectations for student performance.
- **Teaching and Learning** - Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by monitoring and continuously improving teaching and learning.
- **Organizational Systems and Safety** - Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by managing organizational systems and resources for a safe, high-performing learning environment.
- **Families and Stakeholders -** Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by collaborating with families and stakeholders to respond to diverse community interests and needs and to mobilize community resources.
- **Ethics and Integrity** - Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students by being ethical and acting with integrity.
- **The Education System** - Education leaders ensure the success and achievement of all students and advocate for their students, faculty and staff needs by influencing systems of political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts affecting education.

The Goal Setting:

The goal setting conference between administrators and their evaluator must occur each year by October 15 even if an administrator sets a goal that spans multiple years. This conference is used to either set a new, mutually agreed upon goal or to make adjustments to a multi-year goal. Multiple measures of organization health, leader and educator growth, and impact on student learning, growth, and achievement are noted as mutually agreed upon during the goal-setting process. Administrators can refer to the RPS Leadership Continuum when creating a goal or when thinking about outcomes. This initial conference also provides an opportunity for an administrator and their evaluators to discuss the resources, professional learning, and other support that might be helpful over the course of the upcoming year.

> Administrators and evaluators must mutually agree on at least two measures of accomplishment that include organization health, leader and educator growth, and impact on student learning to demonstrate the impact of their learning on educators, students, and/or the school community. One of the goals is defined as a shared-building goal and a second goal is defined as an Individual Professional Goal. Examples of administrator goals and measures of accomplishment can be found here.

The Mid-Year

The purpose of the mid-year check-in is to provide a time for reflection and adjustment of progress toward goals and evidence collected so far to support the goal. In addition, the mid-year provides an opportunity for the evaluator to also provide feedback to the administrator on overall performance. At least one observation of professional practice should occur *prior* to the midyear conference.   The mid-year must occur by March 1st.

The Summative

The summative conference must occur by June 30 and include an administrator's verbal self-reflection on their professional growth and its impact on educators, student learning, and/or the school community. In the summative narrative, the evaluator should consider commendations, areas of growth, and next steps for the following year. Administrators can refer to the RPS Leadership Continuum when writing the summative narrative. A summative narrative will be provided including a checkbox indicating the successful completion of the annual process. Feedback, tied to standards, identifies strengths and areas of focus for advancement. The Self-Reflection and Annual Summary are based on agreed upon standards and goals.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Primary Evaluators

All administrators shall be assigned a primary evaluator (with 092 or 093 certification). The chart below outlines the primary evaluator for each administrator role.

Role	Primary Evaluator
Building Principals	Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and Assistant Superintendent of Special Services
Assistant Principals	Building Principal
Preschool Supervisor	Assistant Superintendent of Special Services
Assistant Director of Special Services	Assistant Superintendent of Special Services
Elementary Director	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Humanities and Math/Science Supervisors 6-12	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Director of Technology	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Special Education Supervisor and Counseling Supervisor	High School Principal
Director of Athletics	High School Principal

LEADER GOALS

GOAL DEVELOPMENT

Purpose of the Administrator Professional Growth and Evaluation Process:

- To support administrator professional growth in a connected and meaningful way.
- To engage in a process that is relevant to the specific needs of each school building leader.
- To support the building administrator in the implementation of their building/department and individual professional growth goals.

Administrators create two goals:
- Building Goal /Department Growth Goal
- Individual Professional Growth Goal

Goals may be aligned with district wide and individual professional development, a theory of action, PLC work, and other integrated efforts to support the goals, mission, and vision established within the district.

Multiple pieces of evidence, which may include artifacts; observations of practice; educator, leader, and staff feedback; and reflections of the leader on organizational growth as part of the leader feedback process. Dialogue through the professional growth process begins with self-reflection/self-assessment about impact of professional learning and leadership practice on organizational health /educator practice on student growth and identification of next steps.

MUTUAL AGREEMENT

Every administrator and their assigned evaluator must mutually agree on one building/department goal and one individual professional growth goal. In addition, during the goal setting meeting, the evidence of progress will be discussed. When considering sources of evidence, the number and type of evidence should be discussed in advance. Goals are to be connected to the RPS Leadership Continuum.

EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS

Possible Goal Areas	Possible Sources for Evidence of Progress
Development of New Learning and Impact on Practice ● The leader can demonstrate how they developed new learning within the continuous learning process through multiple sources (e.g., observational feedback, data, walkthroughs, etc.) and how they used their new learning to improve practice. **Impact on the Organization** ● The leader can demonstrate how they positively impacted the organizational health and can articulate connections/rationale between the improved learning and their own changes in practice. **Impact on Community** ● The leader can demonstrate how they worked effectively with colleagues/families/community.	● Information from site visits ● Strategic plans ● Learning walk/instructional rounds ● 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

Note: While feedback during the Mid-Year meeting and Summative narrative focus on these goals, "Observations of Practice" may or not be directly connected to a goal recognizing that the responsive leadership practices are necessary.

LEADER PRACTICE (OBSERVATIONS)

Observations of Professional Practice Timeline at a Glance:

Administrator Status	Minimum Number of Observations	Observation Deadlines	Goal Setting	Mid-year	End-of-Year
New Administrators	3	First completed prior to mid-year	Oct 15th	March 1	June 30
Administrators	2	First completed prior to mid-year	Oct 15th	March 1	June 30

OBSERVATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Observation of professional practice is any observation of leadership. This can take many forms depending on the role and scope of the administrator's position. Feedback from the evaluator can be informed by the RPS Leadership Continuum.

Observation of Professional Practice	
New Administrators	**Administrators**
Who: • New to leadership role • New to the Ridgefield Public Schools (first year) What: • Three observations of professional practice (One completed prior to Mid-Year) • Verbal feedback within five school days of the observation. Written feedback within 10 school days of the date of verbal feedback. • Additional observations of professional practice scheduled/unscheduled.	Who: • Administrators with more than 1 year in the role or at least one year in the Ridgefield Public Schools What: • Two observations of professional practice (One completed prior to Mid-Year) • Verbal feedback within five school days of the observation. Written feedback within 10 school days of the date of verbal feedback. • Additional observations of professional practice as mutually agreed upon or deemed necessary by the evaluator

FEEDBACK

Criteria: Feedback will be tied to standards, identifies strengths and areas of focus for advancement. Clear times for both written and verbal feedback will be determined. A process will be established to determine appropriate feedback and how to use informal and formal feedback.

Administrators, like educators, depend on high-quality feedback and support to fuel their professional growth and maximize their impact on teaching and learning. Feedback in the Ridgefield Leader Professional Growth & Evaluation Plan is formative rather than evaluative and should be timely, specific, growth-oriented, actionable, and digestible. Feedback will also consist of multiple and varied qualitative and quantitative indicators of professional growth. Evaluators should receive regular feedback at each of the three annual conferences (goal setting, mid-year, and summative) and verbal feedback within 5 school days of an observation of professional practice followed by written feedback within 10 school days of the verbal feedback. In addition, feedback should be coupled with meaningful support to help guide the administrator's growth.

Ridgefield Public Schools is a learning organization and thus dedicated to continuous improvement in the area of giving and receiving feedback. This includes systems and structures of support to continually calibrate new and returning administrators in observations and best practices in providing feedback, both written and verbal. In addition, new administrators will receive specific training on the format, resources, and expectations of the observation practices within the Ridgefield Public Schools.

Goal Setting Completed by October 15	Mid-year Check-in Completed by March 1	End-of-Year Reflection Completed by June 30
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TRAINING AND ORIENTATION: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR LEADERS AND EVALUATORS

All evaluators are required to complete training on the Ridgefield Leader Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan. The purpose of training is to provide evaluators of administrators with the tools that will result in evidence-based school site observations, professional learning opportunities tied to evaluation feedback, improved educator effectiveness and student performance.

All types of evaluators will receive training on the components of this plan. Orientations will incorporate training and support in all elements of the plan. These include high-leverage goal setting, professional learning plans, calibration of teaching and feedback learning walks in schools, understanding the three tiers of support, the corrective support plan, and practice using rubrics and standards. Additionally, ongoing support for evaluators will be provided in the area of giving high-leverage and relevant informal and formal feedback. In conclusion, support for evaluators will encompass both building an understanding of the components of the plan and developing the coaching skills necessary to support educators' growth and practice to impact student growth.

LEVELS OF SUPPORT

All leaders require access to high-quality, targeted professional learning support to improve practice over time. Ridgefield Public Schools works to continually support and grow all leaders. During the administrator evaluation process, if it's identified that an administrator needs additional support, this will be clearly documented and communicated to them. The administrator shall be represented by his/her exclusive bargaining representative at a Structured Support Plan meeting. There will be ongoing training to ensure all stakeholders understand differentiated supports and processes.

Levels of support are not punitive and begin with the support provided to all leaders as members of a learning organization.

The three levels of support are:

Level 1	It is the expectation that all leaders consistently access opportunities for professional growth within their district. Level 1 supports are broadly accessible professional learning opportunities for all, inclusive of, but not limited to, collegial conversations, school site visits, available district resources (e.g., books, articles, videos, etc.), formal professional learning opportunities developed and designed by your district PDEC and other leader supports (e.g., leadership coaching). These resources should be identified through a goal setting process by mutual agreement.
Level 2	In addition to Level 1, Level 2 supports are more intensive in duration, frequency, and focus (e.g., observation of specific leadership practices, etc.) that can be either suggested by the leader and/or recommended by an evaluator.
Level 3	In addition to Level 1 and 2, Level 3 supports have clearly articulated areas of focus, duration of time, and criteria for success, and may lead to a decision to move to a Support Plan. Level 3 supports shall be developed in consultation with the evaluator, leader and their exclusive bargaining representative for certified leaders chosen pursuant to C.G.S. §10- 153b. The start date and duration of time an educator is receiving this level of support should be clearly documented. Utilize and document all three tiers prior to movement to a structured support plan.
Structured Support Plan	In addition to Level 1,Level 2, and Level 3 supports are responsive to unresolved, previously discussed concerns that are collaboratively discussed and may be assigned by an evaluator. Structured Support plans should never be punitive or overwhelming and must provide sequential levels of targeted, meaningful support. The duration of a plan should be reasonable and may be extended if an administrator is making some progress but not yet meeting all the criteria to exit the plan. Support Plan shall be developed in consultation with the evaluator, leader and their exclusive bargaining

	representative for certified leaders chosen pursuant to C.G.S. §10-153b.

Structured Support Plan

A pattern of persistent lack of growth and reflection or resistance to growth-oriented feedback should lead to a defined process for placing a leader on a Structured Support Plan with indicators of success for transitioning out of the plan. A Structured Support Plan is different from the normal support provided for all leaders. Evaluators must utilize and document all three tiers of support prior to the development of a Structured Support Plan. The Structured Support Plan shall be developed in consultation with the evaluator, leader and their exclusive bargaining representative for certified leaders chosen pursuant to C.G.S. §10-153b.

CRITERIA MUST BE MET BEFORE PLACEMENT ON A STRUCTURED SUPPORT PLAN

Before an administrator can be placed on a Structured Support Plan, the following conditions must be met:
- There must be a pattern of specific, ongoing concerns previously documented in the feedback to the administrator.
- There must be documented attempts to informally help and support the administrator prior to consideration of a Structured Support Plan.

Points to Consider for Structured Support Plan

Well-articulated Structured Support Plans:
- Clearly identify targeted supports, in consultation with the administrator, which may include specialized professional development, collegial assistance, increased supervisory observations and feedback, and/or special resources and strategies aligned to the improvement outcomes.
- Clearly delineate goals linked to specific indicators and domains within the observation of the practice/ RPS Leadership Continuum that specify exactly what the administrator must demonstrate at the conclusion of the Structured Support Plans.
- Indicate a timeline for implementing such resources, support, and other strategies, in the course of the same school year as the plan is developed. Determine dates for interim and final reviews in accordance with stages of support.
- Include evidence of progress towards goal(s).
- Includes supportive actions from the evaluator.

At the conclusion of the Corrective Support Plan period, a number of outcomes are possible as determined in consultation with the evaluator, leader and bargaining unit representative.

REQUIRED COMPONENTS
In accordance with state statute, Structured Support Plans must be created in consultation with the administrator and their collective bargaining representative and include the following: clear objectives, a specific timeline, resources and support to be provided by the district, and criteria for success.

THE DISPUTE-RESOLUTION PROCESS

This section outlines the dispute-resolution process of the Leader Professional Growth and

Evaluation Plan. The local or regional board of education shall include a process for resolving disputes in cases where the evaluator and administrator cannot agree on goals/ objectives, the evaluation period, or the process associated with providing feedback or the professional development plan. When such an agreement cannot be reached, the issue in dispute will be referred to the bargaining unit and/or Director of Personnel. In the event that the designated committee does not reach a unanimous decision, the issue shall be considered by the superintendent whose decision shall be binding. Claims that the district has failed to follow the established procedures of the evaluation and support program shall be subject to the current collective bargaining organization.

Process:

The leader being evaluated shall include a collective bargaining representation at all levels of the process.
> 1. Within three school days of articulating the dispute in writing to his/her/their evaluator, the leader being evaluated and the evaluator 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 his/her/their evaluator (step 1). The leader being evaluated may choose between two options.

Option 1: The issue in dispute may be referred for resolution to a subcommittee of the Ridgefield Administrator Evaluator Committee, which will serve as a neutral party. The superintendent or designee and the respective collective bargaining unit for the district may each select one representative from the Ridgefield Administrator Evaluator Committee to constitute this subcommittee, as well as a neutral party as mutually agreed upon between the superintendent and the collective bargaining unit. It is the role of the subcommittee to determine the resolution of the dispute and to identify any actions to be taken moving forward and to notify the superintendent of the decision.

Option 2: The leader being evaluated requests that the superintendent or designee solely arbitrate the issue in dispute. In this case, the superintendent will review all applicable documentation and meet with both parties (evaluator and leader being evaluated) as soon as possible, but no longer than five school days from the date of the written communication to the superintendent. The superintendent 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 leader being evaluated 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 evaluator within five workdays, the leader shall be considered to have waived the right of appeal.
> 4. The leader being evaluated 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.

APPENDIX

RPS Forms and Worksheets (DRAFT)
- Developing Administrator Growth Goals
- Building and District Leadership Growth Goals Worksheet
- Administrator Observation of Professional Practice Template
- RPS Leader Evaluation Continuum (adapted from CT Leader Evaluation Support Rubric)