Characteristics of Professional Excellence at NPS

At NPS, our faculty and staff are committed to providing our students an engaging academic program in a loving environment, and as such we embrace the following *Characteristics of Professional Excellence*:

- We follow the NPS mission and Core Values by showing compassion for our students and by recognizing that academic progress and healthy development are the result of social, emotional, and physical well-being.

- We demonstrate grace, respect, effort, and consistency in our actions to cultivate the character and ethical development of all of our students.

- We inspire our students to develop a passion for learning by teaching with enthusiasm, flexibility, an open mindset, humor, and a wealth of background knowledge.

- We strive to meet the needs of all of our learners through intentional and well-prepared lessons rooted in collaboration with our fellow teachers across the disciplines.

- We maintain high yet developmentally appropriate standards for our students and, as experts in child development, are able to articulate these standards to our colleagues and to the school community.

- We demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning through professional development and growth and integrate knowledge of effective, research-based pedagogy into our teaching in a thoughtful manner.

- We promote and model the importance of service learning both in NPS and in the greater community.

- We recognize the crucial partnership between parents and the School in the education and growth of all students and work to communicate effectively at all times.
NPS Faculty & Staff Norms

We believe that a written document of the central values distinguishing our faculty and staff community at NPS is important. As a community of educators, we believe that we should:

* BE PROFESSIONAL  
* COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY  
* BE POSITIVE  
* BE KIND

* COLLABORATE  
* SHOW GRACE  
* BE RESPECTFUL

By BE PROFESSIONAL, we mean that we are dedicated and that we demonstrate pride in our work through our deeds. It means that we are responsible and dependable, that we strive to work productively and efficiently, and that we pay attention to details. It means that we respect others’ privacy and are discrete with information about parents, children and colleagues. It also means that our behaviors demonstrate self-respect and respect for our work place. We show good manners at all times and we work to maintain a clean and safe environment.

By COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY, we mean that we are open, honest, and direct in our interactions. We avoid gossip and handle problems directly with the appropriate person. It means that we strive to be clear and to keep communications simple. We actively listen when others speak, we read instructions and other written communications, and we are responsive to our colleagues and to NPS families in timely ways. It means that we are thoughtful and proactive in our communication, taking care to be inclusive and leaving no one out who needs to be part of a conversation.

By COLLABORATE, we mean that we work together for the common good, sharing space, time, and ideas. We are team players who are helpful, cooperative, and responsible. It means that we compromise when appropriate, that we are both understanding and flexible, and that we serve as both leaders and followers when needed. It means that as we work together, we share the work load and that we agree to trust each other.

By BE POSITIVE, we mean that we strive to always bring a cheerful, friendly and easy manner to our work and to our interactions. We offer encouragement and praise; we laugh and show a sense of humor, enjoying both our work and the people we work with. It means we avoid judgment and negativity, but not constructive criticism and we accept feedback as such. It means that we are growth-oriented and open to change. It means that we are reflective and thoughtful in our work, being true to our love of what we do. It means that we always aim to take the high road, acting in ways that build up and do not damage the NPS community to which we are so fortunate to belong; we are solution-oriented, looking for answers rather than just pointing out problems.

By BE KIND, we mean that we treat others the same way we want to be treated. We are inclusive, warm, welcoming, and understanding to all members of the NPS community. It means that we smile and are friendly. We are generous - helping others and expressing gratitude for support from others. It means that we care about and show love towards the people of NPS, especially the children.

By SHOW GRACE, we mean that we are forgiving and tolerant of each other. We allow each other to make mistakes, assuming the best of one another. It means that we are empathetic and understanding, reserving judgment. It means that we are calm and show appreciation for each other's efforts and intentions.

By BE RESPECTFUL, we mean that we think, speak, and act in ways demonstrating that we value each other's ideas, feelings, work, and time. It means that we appreciate others for who they are. We take care of each other’s resources and clean up after ourselves. It means that we honor each other’s differences and are patient with one another. It also means that we show respect for ourselves, striving for balance in work, play, and rest.

We agree to strive to live up to these norms and to help one another do so as well.

Created April 2011 by the entire NPS faculty and staff
Professional Growth and Evaluation Process Overview

All teachers will be involved in the goal setting process each year together with their Division Director. All teachers will then meet with the Director of Studies to discuss possible professional development work that supports their goal.

**Cycle 1:** All teachers new to NPS and any teacher in their first year in a new grade level. Teachers in Cycle 1 will receive at least one formal observation by their Division Director during the school year. Additional formal observations may be required by the Division Director or may be requested by the teacher. The Division Director’s formal observation will include a pre-conference, a classroom observation, a post-conference, a teacher reflection of the lesson, and an end of the year summative evaluation which will include informal classroom visits and connections to the NPS Faculty and Staff Norms. Additionally, the Director of Studies is available to teachers for instructional coaching and support as needed or requested.

**Pre-conference:** The Division Director and the teacher will meet before the observation. They will agree on a date for the formal observation and the teacher will discuss the lesson and its specific learning objectives to be covered during the observation. The teacher will pose questions that she/he would like the Division Director to consider and observe and areas she/he would like feedback.

**Observation:** The Division Director will observe in the classroom for the entire classroom period.

**Post-conference:** The Division Director and the teacher will meet to discuss the lesson presented during the observation. The Division Director will make comments relating to the questions and areas of concern posed by the teacher. The categories and criteria for observation will be distributed to teachers at the beginning of the year to ensure clarity and to establish the professional development objective. The teacher will also complete a reflection document as an opportunity to comment and reflect on the lesson.

**Summative:** After the lesson and post-conference, the Division Director will write an end of the year summative form with recommendations and commendations of the post-conference. Teachers who exceed the expectations will receive commendations, which highlight exemplary performance during the school year. Recommendations may
include areas of growth or concern including suggestions, strategies, or resources for improvement. Any areas of growth or concern will become goals for the coming year.

**Cycle 2:** Teachers in Cycle 2 will work with their Division Director to identify an area of the curriculum they can focus on and improve for the coming year. The choice for this area of focus will be a mutually agreed upon one that respects the curriculum change process. Cycle 2 teachers will be asked to keep track of their year’s work through both a reflection process and a collection of artifacts (see attached form: End of the Year Self-Reflection). The teacher and the Division Director will meet at a mutually convenient time before the end of the school year to sign off on this reflection.

**Cycle 3:** Teachers in Cycle 3 will work with their Division Director to identify a project that simultaneously benefits the teacher professionally and the School as a whole. Similar to an independent study project model, this cycle encourages teachers to think beyond the scope of their classroom responsibilities and/or curriculum for the year as they consider the arc of their career and the possibilities for their future in education. Cycle 3 teachers will be asked to keep track of their year’s work through both a reflection process and a collection of artifacts (see attached form: End of the Year Self-Reflection). The teacher and the Division Director will meet at a mutually convenient time before the end of the school year to sign off on this reflection.

All teachers are responsible for the *NPS Characteristics of Professional Excellence*, living up to the *NPS Faculty and Staff Norms*, and the domains embedded in the summative evaluation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Cycle 1</th>
<th>Cycle 2</th>
<th>Cycle 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Consider Goal</td>
<td>Consider Goal</td>
<td>Consider Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Meet with Division Director to set initial goal</td>
<td>Meet with Division Director to set initial goal</td>
<td>Meet with Division Director to set initial goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October-November</td>
<td>Instructional Focus. Begin workshop on initial goal and area of curriculum.</td>
<td>Instructional Focus. Begin workshop on initial goal and area of curriculum.</td>
<td>Instructional Focus. Begin workshop on initial goal and area of curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Meet with Division Director to discuss and do PDEs</td>
<td>Meet with Division Director to discuss and do PDEs</td>
<td>Meet with Division Director to discuss and do PDEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Post Observation Conference with Division Director. Present formal lesson plan.</td>
<td>Pre Observation Conference with Division Director.</td>
<td>Present formal lesson plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October-November</td>
<td>Director of Studies to needed. Continue discussion on PDEs.</td>
<td>Observation &amp; lesson set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Timeline**

- **Project**
  - Report out to community on your and portfolio work.
  - Update D. on curricular goal
- **Curricular Work**
  - Report out to community on your and portfolio work.
  - Update D. on curricular goal

**Evaluation**

- Teacher to discuss and analyze division director meets with division director.
- Throughout the year, director of studies as needed continue coaching support with division director.

**Additional Notes**

- Decide how you will collect and organize your documentation to meet your goal.
- Discuss applicable PDEs.
- Meet with Director of Studies to discuss documentation with D. and Director, and project ideas. Begin workshop on initial goal and area of curriculum.
- Meet with Division Director to set initial goal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Growth and Evaluation Timeline</th>
<th>National Presbyterian School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>June</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Professional Development Worksheet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consider possible goals for next school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End of June, July, and Beginning of August</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summer PD as an extension of your Cycle 1 work or in anticipation of Cycle 2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End of Year Teacher Self-Reflection and Professional Development Worksheet</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consider possible goals for next school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End of Year Teacher Self-Reflection and Professional Development Worksheet</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consider possible goals for next school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summer PD as an extension of your Cycle 3 work or in anticipation of Cycle 1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Domains of Professional Excellence

A. CLIMATE

- Maintains a classroom atmosphere that inspires learning
- Establishes positive relationships with students, which are characterized by mutual respect and goodwill
- Creates a safe, secure, and nurturing environment in which students grow in both autonomy and the ability to work and play together
- Models curiosity, integrity and creativity as well as the NPS core values
- Attends to the social and emotional needs of students
- Cultivates the character and ethical development of students
- Practices mission-consistent discipline in all instances

B. PROFICIENCY

- Possesses a thorough knowledge for his/her teaching assignment
- Articulates curriculum and instructional practices to colleagues and school community
- Stays abreast of recent developments in the field of education
- Has appropriate training and knowledge of the developmental characteristics of the pre-primary and elementary school child
- Collaborates with colleagues and leadership in the design and implementation of curriculum
- Maintains curriculum documents for his/her grade level and/or content area

C. ASSESSING and addressing STUDENT GROWTH and progress

- Assesses learning in a variety of ways, including formative and summative assessments
- Documents student learning and progress throughout the school year
- Sets high standards/expectations for all students
- Provides continuous reinforcement/feedback and support that leads to performance at or near each student’s capacity
- Articulates students’ strengths and weaknesses to parents and colleagues
- Provides detailed feedback to parents regarding their child’s progress and offers suggestions for support and enrichment
  Provides students with tools, strategies, and resources to successfully prepare for assessments
D. PREPARATION

- Demonstrates planning for instruction, including lesson plans, unit plans, learning objectives and long-term planning
- Demonstrates that he/she is self-aware and self-monitoring in identifying and solving student, curricular, and school problems
- Maintains high yet developmentally appropriate standards for students
- Communicates with students, parents, colleagues and other members of the community regularly, promptly and in a positive and clear manner

E. INSTRUCTION

- Inspires students to develop a passion for learning.
- Communicates directions, concepts and ideas clearly and accurately
- Uses a variety of teaching strategies suitable to the age and needs of the student and subject matter being taught
- Uses instructional strategies that actively engage all students in making connections, solving problems and thinking independently
- Employs strategies that appeal to a variety of learning styles and intelligences

F. PROFESSIONALISM

- Pays attention to punctuality, attendance, lesson planning, report writing and student supervision
- Responds to the needs of the school as requested
- Demonstrates respect for the confidentiality of our students, our families, and one another
- Exhibits a positive and professional attitude towards colleagues, parents, students, and the School
- Demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning through professional development and growth
- Integrates knowledge of effective, research-based pedagogy into the classroom in a thoughtful manner
- Strives actively to live up to the NPS Faculty and Staff Norms
Professional Goal Planning Sheet 2017-2018

Name: ________________________________  Cycle: ______

Goal Setting with Division Director:


Professional Development Exploration with Director of Studies:
Colleagues Who Can Offer Support:
Menu of Professional Development Opportunities at NPS

- Attend a workshop sponsored by AIMS, AISGW, NAIS etc.
- Spend the day at another school and report out at a faculty meeting.
- Write for the NPS blog
- Write for the AIMS blog
- Publish an article
- Read a professional book
- Create a summer study project to benefit both you and the School
- Spend a day shadowing one of your students
- Spend a day visiting another grade
- Spend the day visiting the specials teachers
- Lead the faculty through a mini-PD workshop
- Attend an evening lecture
- Serve on an AIMS Accreditation team
- Take a webinar
- Present a workshop at an AIMS Conference
- Skype or collaborate long distance with other schools
- Collaborate on project with colleagues or teachers outside of school.
- Take education classes or classes in a specialty
- Spend a day in service to others outside of NPS
Name:______________________ Position:____________________

_____ August 31, 2016: Allergy & Anaphylaxis Training, Patti Saylor, R.N.

_____ September 1, 2016: First Aid Certification Training, Kevin Coombs, American Health Services

_____ September 1, 2016: Mandated Reporter Training, Jeni Reklis and Betsy Argintar, Counselors

_____ September 9, 2016: Diversity Through a Developmental Lens Faculty Presentation, Rosetta Lee

_____ November 4, 2016: Parent Book Club, NPS

_____ November 10, 2016: Diversity and Community Dinner, Raising Culturally Competent Kids, Samantha Sweeney

_____ November 19, 2016: Family Service Saturday, NPS

_____ Fall semester: Admissions Curriculum Coffee Presenter

_____ October 2016, Author-in-Residence, Marc Tyler Nobleman

_____ February 9, 2017, Parent Book Club, NPS

_____ February 12, 2017, NPS Professional Development Day: Mindfulness, NPS

_____ February 22, 2017, An Evening with Rosetta Lee, NPS

_____ March 2017, Family STEAM Night, NPS hosts

Professional Goal:

Professional Literature:

Creating Cultures of Thinking by Ron Ritchhart et. al.

Schools Visited:
Cycles 2 & 3: End of Year Teacher Self-Reflection

Please choose only two of the following questions and answer thoughtfully. Please send one copy of your responses to your Division Director and save one for yourself:

○ What is my level of satisfaction now with each student’s learning experience?
○ Are my students demonstrating comprehension of material taught?
○ Are my students applying new skills to larger problems?
○ Is there evidence of increased intrinsic motivation in my students?
○ Is there evidence of a joy for learning in my students?
○ How has my professional development had an impact on my students? What new characteristics are they developing? (such as, sense of hope, confidence, and belief in their efforts)

As part of your reflection, please elaborate using at least three of the following prompts to support your answers above:

○ Anecdotes from the year
○ Conversations you have had with students
○ Conversations you have had with parents
○ Impressions you have gained about yourself, before and after
○ Passing references made to you by colleagues
○ Conversations with peers
○ Any other evidence you feel would be worthwhile

Please note that the teacher and the Division Director will meet at a mutually convenient time before the end of the school year to sign off on this reflection.
Resources


