

St. Johnsbury Academy Faculty Development

Teacher Evaluation, Collaboration, and Continuous Improvement

St. Johnsbury Academy approaches faculty hiring and retention as a process of investing in the development of teachers so they can do their best work. Faculty Improvement Grants, sabbatical time, funded Master's degrees, thoughtful in-service training, and the portfolio comprise important resources for professional development in teaching and all areas of school life that affect the student experience. .

Our faculty and staff is dynamic, accomplished, experienced and dedicated to the growth and development of young people.

Faculty Facts

- 235 employees, including 116 teaching faculty
- Average class size: 12
- The student to faculty ratio is 8:1; the student to adult ratio is 4:1
- Between 80 and 85% of teaching faculty have advanced and terminal degrees;
- School funds Master's degrees and licenses and certifications (SPED, CTE, nurses, social workers) as needed
- \$160,000 in Faculty Improvement Grants annually from board-designated fund
- All teaching faculty are expected to:
 - serve as a faculty advisor for 8-10 students
 - sponsor an after-school club or activity, and
 - participate in the residential life program

Continuous Improvement

New faculty are carefully oriented, assigned a faculty mentor, and observed regularly by the heads of their departments.

We require regular professional development for all faculty and also provide the opportunity for semester or year-long sabbaticals for teachers to engage in substantive work toward a professional goal.

Our nine-level step scale for faculty is based on years of experience and educational attainment. The steps are:

- Apprentice Levels I-III
- New Teacher Levels I-V
- Professional Level (requires Master's degree in relevant field/education)

Of our 116 current teachers, 97 are at the professional level.

Evaluation and Portfolio Process

The Portfolio Process is part of continuing development for all faculty. It is a structured and collaborative process for teachers to engage in reflection and refinement of their craft. Our objectives are threefold and based on our mission and the expectations we set out for faculty.

Character

- Maintain ethical and appropriate relationships
- Show enthusiasm for teaching and working with young people
- Promote good character

Inquiry

- Show enthusiasm for the craft of teaching and professional dialogue
- Be qualified for position
- Use assessments to improve student learning
- Implement engaging and effective lessons

Community

- Show a professional and responsible attitude toward the order of the school
- Maintain proper tone and environment for learning
- Be committed to the Academy's culture of kindness and respect

SJA Faculty Handbook

Framework

The process involves teachers reflecting on their practice, collaborating with peers, and refining their craft. Using the Framework For Teaching (FFT) developed by Charlotte Danielson, they focus on different domains relevant to teaching practice:

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1a Applying Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

- 1b Knowing and Valuing Students
- 1c Setting Instructional Outcomes
- 1d Using Resources Effectively
- 1e Planning Coherent Instruction
- 1f Designing and Analyzing Assessments

Domain 2: Learning Environments

- 2a Cultivating Respectful and Affirming Environments
- 2b Fostering a Culture for Learning
- 2c Maintaining Purposeful Environments
- 2d Supporting Positive Student Behavior
- 2e Organizing Spaces for Learning

Domain 3: Learning Experiences

- 3a Communicating About Purpose and Content
- 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- 3c Engaging Students in Learning
- 3d Using Assessment for Learning
- 3e Responding Flexibly to Student Needs

Domain 4: Principled Teaching

- 4a Engaging in Reflective Practice
- 4b Documenting Student Progress
- 4c Engaging Families and Communities
- 4d Contributing to School Community and Culture
- 4e Growing and Developing Professionally
- 4f Acting in Service of Students

Teachers participate in a year-long, six-part process of orientation, embedded retreats focused on each of the four domains, and a formal reflection and presentation to the faculty.

The embedded retreat model makes SJA's commitment to good teaching clear by promoting:

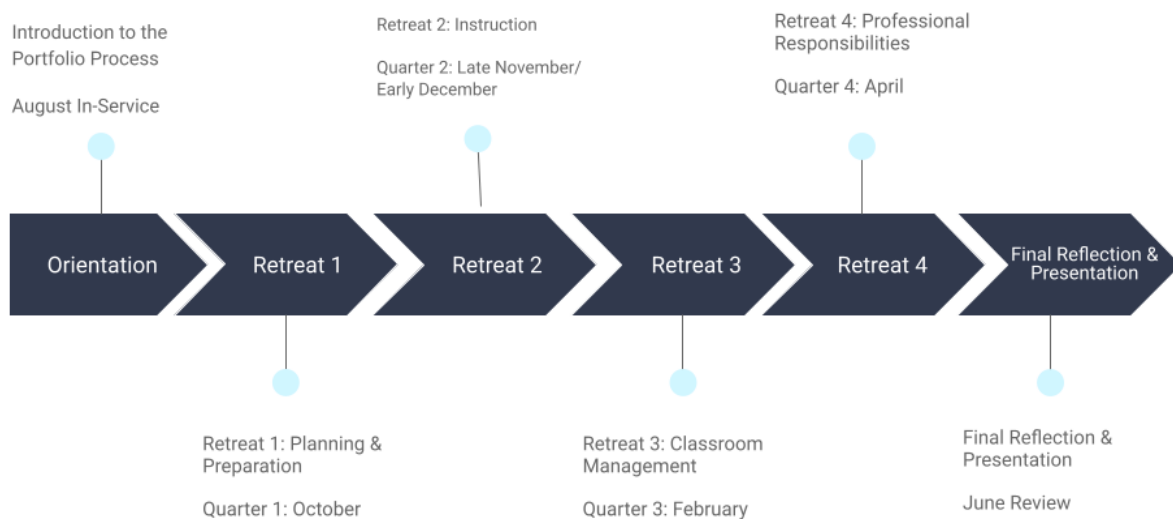
- Collegiality
- Valuing of teachers' time and development process
- Focus on particular topics
- Supportive teaching atmosphere

- Opportunities for growth
- Structure that closely aligns with VT Teaching Portfolio

Because of its cohort-focused nature, the process also breaks down disciplinary “silos”

- Encourages cross curricular collaboration
- Reveals overlap of skills development in courses across disciplines
- Builds towards school-wide curricular mapping

The process timeline flows from August In-service to June Review:



The final portfolio includes notes on observation and evaluation from supervisors in all spheres of school life, and the materials created throughout the year-long portfolio process would serve as the faculty member’s evaluation and professional development plan.