

**STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2008-09**

High School Edition

**Norwich Free Academy  
Norwich Free Academy**

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Location: 305 Broadway  
 Norwich,  
 Connecticut

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This profile was produced by the Connecticut State Department of Education in accordance with CT General Statutes 10-220(c) using data and narratives provided by the school district or testing services. Profiles and additional education data, including longitudinal data, are available on the internet at [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov).

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**TYPE OF SCHOOL**

School Type: Traditional/Regular Education  
 School Grade Range: 9-12

**STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment on October 1, 2008: 2,489  
 5-Year Enrollment Change: 7.7%

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District Reference Group (DRG): G DRG is a classification of districts whose students' families are similar in education, income, occupation, and need, and that have roughly similar enrollment. The Connecticut State Board of Education approved DRG classification for purposes of reporting data other than student performance.

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**INDICATORS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED**

Need Indicator	Number in School	Percent in School	High Schools	
			% in DRG	% in State
Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals	366	14.7	27.4	26.0
Students Who Are Not Fluent in English	77	3.1	2.0	3.3
Students Identified as Gifted and/or Talented	0	0.0	4.1	4.7
Students with Disabilities	342	13.7	11.4	10.6
Juniors and Seniors Working 16 or More Hours Per Week	192	17.2	21.3	19.0

**PROGRAM AND INSTRUCTION**

Average Class Size	School	DRG	State
Algebra I	18.7	19.0	18.7
Biology I	19.4	19.2	19.3
English, Grade 10	19.4	18.6	19.1
American History	20.6	20.9	19.9

**Language Instruction:** Instruction was offered in the following language(s): French, Greek, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish.

Instructional Time	School	State High Schools
Total Days per Year	182	182
Total Hours per Year	1,014	1,007

State law requires that at least 180 days of school and 900 hours of instruction be offered to students in high school grades.

### Lunch

An average of 30 minutes is provided for lunch during full school days.

% Juniors and Seniors Enrolled in a Course or Courses for College Credit	School	State
During the 2007-08 School Year	64.9	30.5

### Minimum Graduation Credits

The state requires a minimum of 20 credits for graduation.

Total Number of Credits Required for Graduation	School	DRG	State
Required for Class of 2008	22.0	22.8	23.3

% of Class of 2008 Graduates who Took Higher Level Courses or Earned More Credits in Selected Subjects than Required by the State for Graduation	School	State
Algebra I or Equivalent	96.9	94.1
Chemistry	85.6	73.6
4 or More Credits in Mathematics	69.4	65.5
3 or More Credits in Science	100.0	91.1
4 or More Credits in Social Studies	62.1	55.4
Credit for Level 3 or Higher in a World Language	61.3	60.6
2 or More Credits in Vocational Education	27.8	59.2
2 or More Credits in the Arts	35.7	41.6

### Class of 2008

This school required more than the state minimum number of credits for graduation in health, physical education, science.

Special Programs	School	High Schools	
		DRG	State
% of Students in Bilingual Education Program or Receiving English as a Second Language Services	3.1	2.0	3.3
% of Gifted and/or Talented Students Who Received Services	N/A	N/A	N/A
% of Special Education Students Who Spent Over 79% of Their Time with Their Non-Disabled Peers:	33.6	63.3	72.6

### LIBRARY AND COMPUTERS

Free on-line access to periodicals, newspapers, and other resources is available to all Connecticut schools through the Connecticut Digital Library at [www.iconn.org](http://www.iconn.org).

Instructional Computers and Library Materials	School	High Schools	
		DRG	State
# of Students Per Computer	3.5	2.6	2.4
% of Computers with Internet Access	100.0	99.8	99.2
% of Computers that are High or Moderate Power	100.0	98.9	98.8
# of Print Volumes Per Student*	13.6	15.6	16.0
# of Print Periodical Subscriptions	83	43	48

\*Because a certain number of volumes are needed for a library of adequate breadth and depth, a small school may need a higher number of volumes per student.

**Interactive Distance Learning:** This school does not utilize interactive distance learning. Interactive distance learning ranges from on-line courses with student-instructor interaction via the internet to live classroom interactions through two-way audio and video transmissions. Statewide, 0.4% of high schools in the state utilize interactive distance learning.

## SCHOOL STAFF

Full-Time Equivalent Count of School Staff		
General Education: Teachers and Instructors		146.50
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants		8.50
Special Education: Teachers and Instructors		20.00
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants		0.00
Library/Media Specialists and/or Assistants		5.50
Administrators, Coordinators, and Department Chairs		8.00
Instructional Specialists Who Support Teachers (e.g., subject area specialists)		0.00
Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists		16.00
School Nurses		2.50
Other Staff Providing Non-Instructional Services and Support		72.00

In the full-time equivalent count, staff members working part-time in the school are counted as a fraction of full-time. For example, a teacher who works half-time in a school contributes 0.50 to the school's staff count.

Teachers and Instructors	School	High Schools	
		DRG	State
Average Number of Years of Experience in Education	13.5	14.4	13.8
% with Master's Degree or Above	75.0	77.0	72.9
Teacher Attendance, 2007-08: Average # of Days Absent Due to Illness or Personal Time	5.4	8.3	8.4
% Assigned to Same School the Previous Year	90.5	89.0	87.0

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### HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

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**Teacher E-Mail Addresses:** All teachers at this school have been issued e-mail addresses.

**Online Homework Information:** A portion of the school's website is devoted to homework pages.

The following narrative about how this school promotes and supports parental involvement was submitted by the school.

The administration, faculty, and staff of the Norwich Free Academy feel that home-school communication is essential to the success of our students. We encourage communication in several ways.

The Norwich Free Academy has a website dedicated to keeping students, parents, alumni, and others informed about the many exciting events occurring at our school, as well as providing a resource for finding details on the day-to-day life on our campus. One important link on the school website is the listing of teacher e-Boards, electronic bulletin boards where teachers post assignments, handouts, and class news for students. Parents can access their children's teachers' e-Boards to learn about their classes. We also encourage parents to email teachers whenever they have a question or concern about their child(ren). Each NFA teacher is accessible by email, with the address of Last Name, First Initial @norwichfreeacademy.com.

Mailings are sent home to alert parents to upcoming special events. Whenever possible, mailings are sent in various languages to meet the needs of our parents who are not English speakers.

When we send our progress reports and report cards home, we also include information such as the Guidance Department newsletter, which helps to inform parents about ways they can help their children succeed while in high school and beyond.

NFA uses the Alert Now system to make phone calls home to parents. The system is used to announce weather-related closings, remind parents about upcoming Parents' Nights, and share other useful information with our families.

Additionally, various publications keep parents apprised of the goings-on at the Norwich Free Academy campus.

NFA's English Department Head, Geoff Serra, publishes a weekly column in The Norwich Bulletin sharing campus news with the local community.

Our alumni office distributes Alma Matters magazine twice each year and the NFA Foundation publishes The Aedile twice yearly for foundation donors and volunteers.

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## SCHOOL DIVERSITY

Student Race/Ethnicity		
Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
American Indian	36	1.4
Asian American	164	6.6
Black	336	13.5
Hispanic	259	10.4
White	1,694	68.1
Total Minority	795	31.9

**Percent of Minority Professional Staff:** 7.7

**Non-English Home Language:** 10.6% of this school's students come from homes where English is not the primary language. The number of non-English home languages is 27.

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### EFFORTS TO REDUCE RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION

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Below is the description submitted by this school of how it provides educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

NFA's student population is approximately 30% minority. As a regional high school, our students also represent elementary and middle schools of various DRGs; this illustrates the economic diversity of our population. We work to ensure that all students representing NFA's diversity are included in all facets of academic and social success and to sustain a campus climate that values and supports a diverse community.

The NFA Diversity program supports, promotes, and coordinates the Academy's multicultural efforts. The Diversity program specifically addresses the academic achievement of students of color and ELL students. The program also focuses on community building. The Diversity Office collaborates with various clubs, offices, and departments at NFA and with community groups and educational institutions to promote multiculturalism. Examples of such efforts include the Haitian Student Club's organization of a community wide celebration held on Haitian Flag Day. Additionally, over 20 students participated in the John Fox Slater Legacy program held in collaboration with the NAACP, which celebrated Slater's support of Historical Black Colleges.

The Diversity Office worked with the Guidance Department to increase the number of students of color that took the SAT or ACT last year. The office facilitated a visit to ECSU by 35 academically successful students of color and coordinated two academic achievement and leadership presentations for approximately 75 ninth grade and tenth grade students of color. The office also works with the Athletic Office to sponsor a mentoring program for student athletes and to assist in increasing the number of minority coaches and the number of minority students participating in athletics.

During the 2008-2009 school year, priority was given to assisting NFA families that struggle economically. All families were provided with application information for the subsidized lunch program. Students were also assisted financially with meeting expenses related to College Board testing and fees for college courses given at NFA.

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### STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOR

Physical Fitness: % Reaching Health Standard on All Four Tests*	School	State	% of Schools in State with Equal or Lower Percent Reaching Standard
Grade 10	39.2	39.9	56.0

\*Includes tests for flexibility, abdominal strength and endurance, upper-body strength and aerobic endurance.

Advanced Placement Courses 2007-08	School	State High Schools
Number of Courses for which Students were Tested	24	10.0
% of Grade 12 Students Tested	13.5	21.2
% of Exams Scored 3 or More*	83.8	72.8

\*A score of three or higher is generally required for earning college credit.

**Connecticut Academic Performance Test, Third Generation, % Meeting State Goal.** The CAPT is administered to Grade 10 students. The Goal level is more demanding than the state Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards. The following results reflect the performance of students with scoreable tests who were enrolled in the school at the time of testing, regardless of the length of time they were enrolled in the school. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented. For more detailed CAPT results, go to [www.ctreports.com](http://www.ctreports.com).

CAPT Subject Area	School	State	% of Schools in State with Equal or Lower Scores
Reading Across the Disciplines	45.6	47.4	53.8
Writing Across the Disciplines	51.2	55.0	47.8
Mathematics	51.0	47.8	58.5
Science	43.2	42.8	55.1

To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov) and click on "No Child Left Behind."

**SAT® I.** The lowest possible score on each subtest is 200; the highest possible score is 800.

SAT® I: Reasoning Test Class of 2008	School	State	% of Schools in State with Equal or Lower Scores
Average Score: Mathematics	519	507	70.7
Critical Reading	509	503	62.4
Writing	502	506	55.2
% of Graduates Tested	69.4	74.5	N/A

Graduation and Dropout Rates	School	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Less Desirable Rates
Graduation Rate, Class of 2008	95.8	92.1	57.4
Cumulative Four-Year Dropout Rate for Class of 2008	3.4	6.6	61.1
2007-08 Annual Dropout Rate for Grade 9 through 12	2.4	2.5	22.6

Activities of Graduates	School	State
% Pursuing Higher Education	89.1	84.1
% Employed, Civilian and Military	10.9	11.0

Student Attendance	School	State High Schools
% Present on October 1	93.8	94.6

### Disciplinary Offenses

Disciplinary offenses committed by students include all serious offenses, offenses involving drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and all incidents resulting in suspension or expulsion. In the 2007-08 school year, 253 students were responsible for these incidents. These students represent 10.1% of the estimated number of students who attended this school at some point during the 2007-08 school year. For more information and data on disciplinary offenses, go to [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov), click on "CEDaR" and then on "Student Data."

Number of Incidents by Disciplinary Offense Category, 2007-08		
Offense Category	Location of Incident	
	School	Other Location
Violent Crimes Against Persons	0	0
Sexually Related Behavior	9	1
Personally Threatening Behavior	41	1
Theft	18	0
Physical/Verbal Confrontation	5	0
Fighting/Battery	25	0
Property Damage	1	2
Weapons	7	0
Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco	27	3
School Policy Violations	332	2
Total	465	9

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### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

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The following narratives was submitted by this school.

The Norwich Free Academy developed the NFA 2020 Plan as the formal program of school improvement. The plan focuses on four distinct yet interrelated areas: Increasing Academic Achievement, Maintaining a Dynamic Curriculum, Ensuring a Plan for Post-Graduate Success, and Maintaining NFA as a Premier School of Choice.

In the 2008-2009 school year, a new partnership with Eastern Connecticut State University began that granted ECSU college credit to NFA students for coursework done at NFA, mirroring our cooperative with the University of Connecticut. Over 50% of the graduating class of 2009 graduated with college credit.

Three new computer mobile labs increased computer access to students. New Interactive White Boards were installed in over forty classrooms. Increased Internet access has had a major impact on student research at NFA. Our students benefitted from the addition of Chinese to program offerings last year. NFA partnered with the American Professional Training group of Norwich to offer EMT and CNA certification. The committee working on post-graduate success teamed with the Norwich Chamber of Commerce to offer career workshops.

Recommendations for future work include: creating a listing of current career/job partnerships in the Career Resource Center, creating a survey instrument to assist NFA in becoming aware of the jobs/careers/internships available to our students, and creating additional internship opportunities for our students. We also researched ways students, parents, and caregivers receive communication regarding postgraduate transition plans and recommend: improving efforts to increase parent attendance at college/career activities through phone calls, mailings, and providing information to parent and community groups, broadening our efforts to send out parent information in Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Chinese, continuing to inform students and parents/caregivers about the services provided by the Career Resource Center, and increasing the number of families participating in Student Education/Occupational Plan meetings.

A major initiative of the Special Education Department this year was technology training for the IEP Direct program. This labor-intensive initiative will ultimately streamline the development of individualized education plans for students while also allowing for enhanced data analysis of special education services. One of our Special Education programs was revamped this year to provide more specialized living skills instruction to students. Parent and community-provider feedback has been very positive.

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### SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

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The space below was optionally used by this school to describe aspects of the school not presented elsewhere in the profile.

Since 1854, the mission of The Norwich Free Academy has been “to return to our hamlets and our 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.”

NFA is an independent regional high school serving students from the towns of Norwich, Bozrah, Canterbury, Franklin, Lisbon, Preston, Sprague, and Voluntown. NFA also welcomes a limited number of tuition students from other local towns, on an individual application basis.

The NFA faculty draws strength from our independent status. A commitment to excellence is balanced with appreciation and care for each student on our campus. NFA students are challenged with a rigorous program of studies culminating the opportunity to earn college credit through three local college programs: Three Rivers Community College, Eastern Connecticut State University, and The University of Connecticut. NFA offers over forty classes that grant college credit, as well as twenty-two different Advanced Placement level classes.

The NFA campus is comprised of ten buildings on a beautiful 38 acre campus. Slater Museum is the jewel of the magnificent school facilities. Included in Slater's collection are 18th - 20th century American paintings and decorative arts, including contemporary Connecticut crafts, 17th - 19th century European paintings and decorative arts, African and Oceanic sculpture, Native American objects, and a plaster cast collection of Egyptian, Archaic, Greek, Roman and Renaissance sculpture. The museum is also a cornerstone of the NFA Fine Arts program, which is for those students that are contemplating a career in art and are interested in continuing their post secondary education at a professional art college, a university art department, or a specialized art school.

NFA students are encouraged to participate fully in the entire high school experience. We offer students nearly seventy different co-curricular activities and over thirty-five interscholastic athletic teams.

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