

MIDDLE SCHOOL MATTERS

INSTITUTE



## Self-Assessment: Dropout Prevention



**Middle School Matters Institute**  
An initiative of the George W. Bush Institute in partnership with  
**The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk**



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## ABOUT THE SELF-ASSESSMENT



Before developing specific implementation goals, educators must take stock of which research-based practices are already in place and which practices are lacking or need improvement. This template guides users through a self-reflection process for **dropout prevention** practices implemented school wide. Users should follow these steps for **each principle**.

## INSTRUCTIONS

**Step 1: Convene a Middle School Matters Leadership team** and set aside 1-2 hours for the self-assessment.

**Step 2: Gather all available data** (see page 4).

**Step 3: Assess current instructional practices**, using data gathered in step 2, and indicate which instructional traits are implemented:  
a) consistently, b) inconsistently, or c) not at all.

Consult the MSM Field Guide for more information:

[https://greatmiddleschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/4a\\_FieldGuide\\_DropoutPrevention\\_July19.pdf](https://greatmiddleschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/4a_FieldGuide_DropoutPrevention_July19.pdf)

**Step 4: Summarize assessment results and determine the level of implementation** according to the rubric (adapted from Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005).

- 1. No Implementation:** No evidence of implementation.
- 2. Exploration:** Willingness to implement, but little to no evidence of actual implementation. May be in planning stage.
- 3. Initial Implementation:** Evidence indicates that implementation has begun but is largely inconsistent.
- 4. Full Implementation:** Strong evidence of implementation of all or most of the traits and practices.
- 5. Sustainability:** Strong evidence of implementation with processes in place for continued implementation in the future.

## NEXT STEPS: GOAL SETTING AND ACTION PLANNING

After conducting this self-assessment, select a few key principles to focus on for the upcoming school year. Using the MSMI Action Plan Template (<https://greatmiddleschools.org/resources/action-plan-templates/>), develop measurable goals with specific action steps and deadlines for each chosen principle.

# Self-Assessment: Dropout Prevention

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Participating team members: \_\_\_\_\_

## SOURCES OF DATA:

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND PERFORMANCE DATA

- Attendance data
- Discipline referral data
- Course passing rates for ELA, science, social studies, and math
- Scores from state assessments and end-of-course assessments
- Scores from standardized achievement tests
- Scores from interim assessments and/or curriculum-based assessments
- List of students receiving intervention and their progress within those interventions
- Demographics, including number of English learners and students in special education

### PROGRAM DATA

- List of students receiving intervention and their progress with those interventions
- School master schedule & class sizes
- Extracurricular activities including documentation of participation and attendance
- Schedule of academic support and enrichment opportunities
- After school tutoring and summer school participation

**Principle 1: Use data systems to help identify students who are at risk of falling off the path to high school graduation.**

Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 1: Use data to identify incoming students with histories of academic problems, truancy, behavioral problems, and retention.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Staff review incoming student records for attendance, grade retention, disciplinary issues, and weak academic performance to identify students who may need additional support.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Staff review additional information from previous teachers about students' motivation, academic potential, social skills, and any instructional challenges the students presented.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c) Staff analyze these data to identify patterns and trends and then systematically act on the information using research- and evidence-based programs and policies.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 2: Continually monitor the academic and social performance of all students.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Designated staff monitor student progress by regularly reviewing report cards, test scores, and discipline referrals and follow up with students when needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) School leaders use these data to identify students who have recently experienced a life event, academic challenge, or other social or behavioral problem that could foreshadow a higher risk of dropping out.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 3: Monitor students' sense of engagement and belonging in school.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) School leadership surveys students periodically or conducts small group interviews to learn about students' perceptions of the school climate and their sense of belonging and engagement.

**Principle 1: Use data systems to help identify students who are at risk of falling off the path to high school graduation.**

Insert Total	Insert Total	Insert Total	Current Level of Implementation
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1: No Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2: Exploration <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3: Initial Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4: Full Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5: Sustainability

## Principle 2: Assign adult advocates to students who are at risk of falling off the path to high school graduation.

Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	Practice 1: Select adults who are committed to student success.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) An adult advocate (teacher, community member, social worker, or other adult) is assigned to work individually with students who have been identified as high risk of dropping out.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) The adult advocate serves as a case manager who interacts with the student offering guidance and support on matters inside and outside of school, modeling positive behavior and decision-making, and being an encouraging and trusted person in the student's life.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	Practice 2: Keep caseloads low.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) The adult advocate's caseload includes fewer than 20 students.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) The adult advocate has time to meaningfully engage with students and resolve issues.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	Practice 3: Match students with adult advocates purposefully.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Students' needs are considered so that they are matched with an adult who can effectively advocate on the student's behalf and adapt activities according to the student's interests and goals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Adult advocates reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the students they are mentoring
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	Practice 4: Provide training to advocates on working with students, parents, and the school staff.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Adult advocates receive training in working with students, parents, and school staff to reduce dropout rates.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Training includes an overview of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resources available for students and their families</li> <li>2. Effective communication strategies</li> </ol>

**Principle 2: Assign adult advocates to students who are at risk of falling off the path to high school graduation.**

Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 5: Establish a regular time in the school day or week for advocates to meet with students.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Consistent meetings are held, based upon student need, providing the opportunity for advocates to give guidance and celebrate successes (e.g., daily or weekly).
Insert Total	Insert Total	Insert Total	<b>Current Level of Implementation</b>
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1: No Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2: Exploration <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3: Initial Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4: Full Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5: Sustainability



### Principle 3: Provide academic support and enrichment to improve academic performance.

Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 1: Provide individual or small-group support in test-taking skills, study skills, or targeted subject areas, such as reading, writing, or mathematics.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Identified students receive academic support (e.g., test-taking and study skills or enrichment courses) in one-on-one or small group settings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Academic support is provided by an adult or peer during advisory periods, lunch periods, or study skills periods built into the schedule.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c) Enrichment courses are 10-12 weeks long and target a particular subject area using engaging teaching strategies (e.g., whole class discovery lessons or differentiated individual and small group instruction).
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 2: Provide extra study time and opportunities for credit recovery and accumulation through after-school, Saturday school, or summer programs.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) The school provides after hours and/or summer school programs that allow students to work closely with teachers to complete missing coursework or credits.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) These programs also help students hone academic skills needed for future success.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c) The school provides summer school enrichment programs designed to increase engagement and target key academic areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	d) The school provides additional support for at-risk students transitioning from elementary school to middle school or middle school to high school.
Insert Total	Insert Total	Insert Total	<b>Current Level of Implementation</b>
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1: No Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2: Exploration <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3: Initial Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4: Full Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5: Sustainability

## Principle 4: Implement programs to improve behavior and social skills.

Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 1: Use adult advocates to help students establish attainable academic and behavioral goals.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Adult advocates, mentors, teachers, or counselors help students set goals for interpersonal skills, academic progress, or improvement in other areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Students take responsibility for their behavior by setting personal benchmarks for each goal and reviewing progress on a regular basis with an adult.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 2: Recognize student accomplishments.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Students are provided with frequent positive rewards and recognition for accomplishments based on progress toward goals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Parents are notified when a student is recognized for accomplishing a goal or completing exceptional schoolwork.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 3: Teach strategies to strengthen problem-solving and decision-making skills.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Problem-solving and decision-making skills and strategies are integrated within existing curricula.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Small-group seminars are provided for identified students to develop cooperative skills and positive relationships with staff, teachers, and students.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	<b>Practice 4: Establish partnerships with community-based program providers and other agencies, such as social services, welfare, mental health, and law enforcement.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) School staff members establish partnerships and coordinate with community-based program providers to meet student needs outside of school.

## Principle 4: Implement programs to improve behavior and social skills.

Insert Total	Insert Total	Insert Total	Current Level of Implementation
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1: No Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2: Exploration <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3: Initial Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4: Full Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5: Sustainability

## Principle 5: Personalize the learning environment and instructional process.

Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	Practice 1: Implement team teaching and smaller classes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) School leadership works to pair teachers within a classroom (team teaching) or reduce classroom sizes in order to foster more teacher-student interaction.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	Practice 2: Use the school schedule to create extended time in the classroom.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) The school implements block-scheduling, extended class periods, or advisory/study periods to provide for more teacher-student and student-student interaction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Students explore topics in greater depth during such extended time opportunities.
Consistently	Inconsistently	Not at All	Practice 3: Foster after-school activities and encourage participation in them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) Staff promote and encourage student participation in extracurricular activities (e.g., athletics, clubs, after-school field trips, service groups).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) Creative activities are provided in after-school programs to encourage students to connect with peers, teachers, and community members.
Insert Total	Insert Total	Insert Total	Current Level of Implementation
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1: No Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2: Exploration <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3: Initial Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4: Full Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5: Sustainability