

## Directions



### **Directions:**

Please use this document as a guide to support your academy team in preparing for an academy review. You can make notes in the boxes next to each measure within a standard of evidence you will use to support your level of academy implementation. If you have any questions, please contact the review coordinator, Michelle Wilcox ([mwilcox@ncacinc.com](mailto:mwilcox@ncacinc.com)).

<p><b>NSOP 1. Defined Mission and Goals.</b>                  The career academy has a written mission, with goals and benchmarks. These are developed by and shared with administrators, teachers, students, parents, advisory board members and others involved in the academy. The mission states or implies at least the following elements: connects high school, postsecondary education and career; raises and maintains student aspirations; increases student achievement; and shows a commitment to equity.</p>			<p>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</p>
<p><b>a. Middle school, college and career connections.</b>                  A career academy's aim is to prepare all students for success as they continue their secondary education. Academies enable students to complete high school entrance requirements while exposing them to a vertical segment of high school and postsecondary options and occupations within a career pathway.</p>			
<p>There is no evidence of high school, postsecondary and career connections in the mission and goal statements and/nor are there appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component.</p>	<p>A focus on high school, postsecondary education and career connections is implied in the mission and goals. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are not identified or are inadequate.</p>	<p>The mission and goals clearly emphasize the strong commitment of the academy to focus on high school preparation and the connection to postsecondary education and careers. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing these components are identified.</p>	
<p><b>b. Student aspirations.</b>                  The academy seeks to raise, maintain, and increase the level of students' motivation while in middle school by providing a focus in a program of studies that reflects their own talents, aspirations, and interests. Continued personal awareness and exploration, along with curriculum, experiential components, and extra-curricular choices also help to provide guidance. It is understood the career academy gives students a opportunity to explore career interests at an early grade. It does not lock students into any career or college theme, but aims to provide the confidence to explore and determine future direction.</p>			
<p>There is no mention of raising or maintaining student aspirations or commitment in the mission and goals statements and/nor are there appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component.</p>	<p>A focus on raising or maintaining student aspirations and commitment is implied in the mission and goals. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are not identified or are inadequate.</p>	<p>The mission and goals clearly emphasize the strong dedication of the academy to raise and maintain student aspirations and commitment. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are identified.</p>	
<p><b>c. Student achievement.</b>                  The academy provides support to all of its students to maintain and increase their achievement in middle school. This support comes through positive relationships with teachers and fellow students, rigorous and relevant curriculum, and experiences with high school, career and postsecondary education options outside the middle school. There is a strong focus on personalization within a collaborative environment.</p>			
<p>There is no evidence of increasing student achievement in the mission and goal statements and/nor are there appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component.</p>	<p>A focus on increasing student achievement is implied in the mission and goals, but not necessarily explicit. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are not identified or are inadequate.</p>	<p>The mission and goals clearly emphasize the strong dedication of the academy to strive to increase student achievement. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are identified.</p>	
<p><b>d. Commitment to equity.</b>                  Each school ensures the career academy reflects the diversity and strengths of its school, community, and district, and the grouping of its students is heterogeneous, flexible, and equitable. The academy is equitably accessible to and serves any interested student, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, special needs, or prior academic level.</p>			

<p>There is no evidence of a commitment to equity in the mission and goals statements and/or there are not appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component.</p>	<p>A focus on ensuring the academy demographic mix represents the school population is implied in the mission and goals, but not necessarily explicit. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are not identified or are inadequate.</p>	<p>The mission and goals clearly emphasize the commitment to ensure the academy demographic mix represents the school population. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are identified.</p>	
<p><b>e. Stakeholder involvement.</b>  <b>Stakeholders involved in the career academy have developed and/or reviewed the mission and goals. Additionally, there are clear benchmarks for assessing how the academy goals are met.</b></p>			
<p>There is no evidence to demonstrate that the mission, goals, and associated benchmarks were created collaboratively, or included input from representatives from a range of relevant stakeholder groups. There is also no evidence that the mission and goals were communicated to all relevant stakeholder groups. <i>(Relevant stakeholder groups include, at a minimum, academy students, parents, faculty and staff, partners, and advisory board members.)</i></p>	<p>There is evidence of limited collaboration in seeking input from representatives of relevant stakeholder groups in the development of the mission, goals, and benchmarks; AND/OR there seems to be limited efforts to make the mission, goals, and benchmarks available to the stakeholder groups relevant to the academy. <i>(Relevant stakeholder groups include, at a minimum, academy students, parents, faculty and staff, partners, and advisory board members.)</i></p>	<p>Evidence demonstrates the mission, goals, and associated benchmarks were created (reviewed) collaboratively and included input from representatives from a range of relevant stakeholder groups. Evidence also demonstrates that the mission and goals were communicated to all relevant stakeholder groups, not only the representatives who assisted with development. <i>(Relevant stakeholder groups include, at a minimum, academy students, parents, faculty and staff, partners, and advisory board members.)</i></p>	

<p><b>NSOP 2. Academy Design.</b>  <b>An academy has a well-defined structure within the middle school, reflecting its status as a small learning community.</b></p>			<p>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</p>
<p><b>a. Cross-grade articulation.</b>  <b>The academy incorporates one or more years' experience, with articulation in its teacher team, curriculum, and instruction across subject areas. It is anticipated there are experiences exploring the various career clusters in alignment with available high school academies.</b></p>			
<p>The academy incorporates one or more grade levels. There are limited opportunities for articulation across subject areas in the teacher team through their curriculum and instruction.</p>	<p>The academy incorporates one or more grade levels. There are opportunities for articulation across subject areas in the teacher team through their curriculum and instruction, but the degree to which continuity is realized is neither clear nor monitored.</p>	<p>The academy incorporates one or more grade levels. There is clear continuity within the teacher team through their curriculum and instruction. Common planning time agendas reveal that time is given to subject integration.</p>	
<p><b>b. Cohort scheduling.</b>  <b>Academy classes consist of academy students who take a series of classes together each year. The academy students take at least two courses as a cohort and at least 80% of the enrollment in these courses is academy students.</b></p>			
<p>Scheduling of academy students seems arbitrary. There is not a clear plan for students to spend the majority of their time together.</p>	<p>Scheduling of academy students is more intentional. However, less than 50% of a student's schedule is shared with other academy students. Academy classes do not necessarily include a minimum of two academic core subjects and career exploration experiences.</p>	<p>Scheduling of academy students is intentional. More than 50% of a student's schedule is shared with other academy students. Academy classes include a minimum of two academic core subjects and career exploration experiences.</p>	
<p><b>c. Physical space.</b>  <b>Where possible, academy classrooms are near each other in the middle school building. Rooms allow for flexible configurations required for project-based learning.</b></p>			
<p>The physical space of the academy is not clear on the map of the school. There is not a specific physical designation of the academy in the school.</p>	<p>The physical space of the academy is somewhat apparent on a map of the school, with approximately half of the academy classrooms located in a single contiguous space. It is unclear why certain academy classrooms are not located within the designated academy area; the impact of the location of the academies is unclear.</p>	<p>The physical space of the academy is clearly apparent on a map of the school, with almost all academy classrooms located in a single contiguous space. Communication among the academy team is facilitated by the physical layout of the academy. The rationale for academy classrooms located outside of the designated academy area is clear and does not prohibit collaboration.</p>	
<p><b>d. Small size, supportive atmosphere.</b>  <b>The academy maintains personalization through limited size, academy staff teamwork, and a supportive atmosphere.</b></p>			
<p>There is no obvious intention to the size of the academy. There is no formalized process or structure to offer individual support for academy students. Neither academy students or staff seem to identify themselves with the academy or the academy team.</p>	<p>The academy is composed of a team of faculty that work mostly with academy students. The academy team utilizes its small size to provide individual supports to academy students and maintain an atmosphere where students feel supported but the sense of belonging within the academy is not obvious.</p>	<p>The academy is composed of a team of faculty that work exclusively with academy students. It is obvious that academy students and team members feel a sense of belonging within the academy and identify themselves specifically with the academy.</p>	

<p><b>NSOP 3. Host Community and Middle School.</b>  <b>Career academies exist in a variety of district and middle school structures which are important determinants of an academy’s success.</b></p>			<p><b>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</b></p>
<p><b>a. Support from the Board of Education and Superintendent.</b>  <b>Academies are an integral part of the middle school improvement strategy for the district and school choice options. The district Board of Education is aware of the academy and its mission and goals, and is on public record in support. Likewise, the Superintendent publicly endorses the academy and offers active support. Both serve as academy liaisons to the broader community and encourage coordination of similar academies across the district.</b></p>			
<p>The Board of Education or Superintendent is aware of academies in the middle schools and is on public record in support of the initiative. However, there is no indication that academies are an integral part of improvement strategies for the district. Evidence of active support is lacking. Evidence of coordination of similar academies across the district is not present.</p>	<p>Members of the Board of Education or the Superintendent have participated in academy-specific activities, e.g., open houses, Advisory Board meetings, or academy partner recruitment. At least one member or the Superintendent is aware of the academy’s functioning, partners, activities, mission, and goals.</p>	<p>The academy can rely on at least one specific member of the Board of Education or the Superintendent to serve as an academy supporter. The academy can call on them to participate in specific events, garner support for this specific academy, and/or represent the academy in other community and/or district meetings. Implementation of academies as an intentional improvement strategy, with the potential for growth across the district, is apparent.</p>	
<p><b>b. Support from the principal and middle school administration.</b>  <b>Academies are an integral part of the school improvement strategy. The middle school principal and other administrators are knowledgeable about the academy, advocate for it publicly, and are actively involved in its funding, staffing, and support. They contribute to a positive academy profile within the middle school.</b></p>			
<p>The Principal and administration are knowledgeable about the academy but do not seem to embrace the academy or academy model as a defining characteristic of the middle school. There is not academy-specific leadership.</p>	<p>The Principal and administration are knowledgeable about the academy, seem to support the academy, and embrace the academy and academy model as a defining characteristic of the middle school. There is an academy-specific administrator who is knowledgeable about the academy activities, functioning, partners, mission, and goals.</p>	<p>There is documentation that the Principal fully supports the academy through advocacy, staffing, and other support, with a commitment to the academy model as a defining characteristic of the middle school. There is academy-specific leadership that is instrumental to the overall and daily planning, functioning, and monitoring of the academy.</p>	
<p><b>c. Adequate funding, facilities, equipment, and materials.</b>  <b>District and middle school administrative support results in appropriate academy scheduling, adequate academy funding, facilities, equipment, and learning materials. Support also advances opportunities for career and technical exploration. These reflect a serious commitment from the community, district, and middle school to the success of the academy.</b></p>			
<p>The academy identifies substantial resource needs (funding, facilities, equipment, or materials) that cannot be addressed with existing plans or actions. These result in barriers to the general overall functioning of a career academy.</p>	<p>The academy has some unmet needs, resulting in barriers to supportive programming efforts, but seems to have identified realistic ways to address some substantial portion of those unmet needs, with high likelihood of success. Support needs to continue to expand so the academy can reach its full potential.</p>	<p>Adequate funding, facilities, equipment, and materials have resulted in supportive scheduling and operations of the academy. The district has provided the needed support for the academy.</p>	

<p><b>NSOP 4. Faculty and Staff.</b>  <b>Appropriate staff selection, leadership, credentialing, and cooperation are critical to an academy’s success.</b></p>			<p><b>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</b></p>
<p><b>a. Teacher Leader(s)/Coordinators.</b>  <b>One or more teachers and a dedicated school administrator take the lead, serving as the Academy Coordinators. They attend advisory board meetings, interact with school administrators and board members, manage the budget, help to coordinate teacher professional development, and coordinate employer, higher education, and parental involvement. Release time and/or a stipend may be provided for this role.</b></p>			
<p>It is unclear whether there is an academy team leader/coordinator for the academy. Policies related to release time and/or stipend for the roles are unclear. The leader/coordinator participates in only a few of the activities listed: attends advisory board meetings, interacts with administrators, manages the academy budget, helps coordinate team professional development, and helps coordinate involvement of the high school, parent, and students.</p>	<p>There is at least one teacher who serves as the academy leader. This role is not completely clear. Reimbursement of time or stipend for the role of team leader is not clear. They participate in approximately half of the activities listed: attends advisory board meetings, interacts with administrators and board members, manages the academy budget, helps coordinate team professional development, and helps coordinate involvement of the high school, parent, and students.</p>	<p>There is a strong team leader/coordinator for the academy who receives release time and/or stipend for the role. The leader/coordinator participates in all of the activities listed: attends advisory board meetings, interacts with administrators, manages the academy budget, helps coordinate team professional development, and and helps coordinate involvement of the high school, parent, and students.</p>	
<p><b>b. Academy staff.</b>  <b>Academy staff is credentialed in their field, work in the academy, and are committed to its mission and goals. Since a career academy’s success rests on good teaching and good teamwork among a cross disciplinary group of staff, they must be well qualified and willingly involved in this role. They understand and support the philosophy and purpose of the academy, work together as a team, and teach a majority of their classes in the academy. The academy staff design instruction and curriculum around career exploration aligned with available high school opportunities, and cooperatively share the duties of operating an academy.</b></p>			
<p>While some team members report they willingly became involved in the academy, others were assigned to the academy. Teachers within the academy teach less than half of their classes (or students) within the academy. Only a small portion of team members has relevant credentials for their roles as academic, themed, administrative, or support positions. It is obvious many of the academy team members do not understand or support the philosophy and purpose of the academy. Academy team members do not work collaboratively and do not share duties of operating an academy.</p>	<p>Team members report they volunteered and/or willingly became involved in the academy. Examination of the master school schedule shows that teachers within the academy teach less than 50% of their classes (or students) within the academy. Most of the team members have relevant credentials in their roles as academic, themed, administrative, or support roles. Some, but not all, of the academy team members understand or support the philosophy and purpose of the academy. Approximately half of the team members work cooperatively as a team and sharing duties of operating the academy.</p>	<p>All team members report they volunteered and/or willingly became involved in the academy. Examination of the master school schedule shows teachers within the academy teach a majority of their classes (or students) within the academy. The credentials for all teachers demonstrate team members have relevant credentials in their roles as academic, themed, administrative, or support roles. It is obvious all of the academy team members understand and support the philosophy and purpose of the academy, work cooperatively as a team and share duties of operating the academy.</p>	
<p><b>c. Support from the counselors, non-academy teachers, and classified staff.</b>  <b>Counselors are members of the academy team, are well versed in the theme of their dedicated academy, and are experts in supporting high school readiness and career exploration. They understand the need for cohort scheduling and ensure academy students are scheduled appropriately. Non-academy staff are also important to its operation. They understand the value of the academy and help in recruiting students for the academy and providing departmental support.</b></p>			

NSOP 4

<p>There is not a strong understanding of cohort scheduling, the value of the academy, or the critical role of a counselor. The counselors and non-academy staff have not received the support they need to be familiar with the academy. Counselors are not necessarily assigned to students within this academy.</p>	<p>Counselors are somewhat supportive of the academy, but there is not strong evidence of their academy support through academy-specific counseling or a thorough understanding of cohort scheduling. Academy counselor(s) work with academy students, and other students in the school. The counselors and non-academy staff have received some training and seem to be familiar with the academy. There is a mixed understanding of cohort scheduling and the value of the academy.</p>	<p>Counselor(s) are intentionally assigned to the academy as an integral part of the academy team. There is strong evidence of their academy support through academy-specific counseling and they have a thorough understanding of cohort scheduling. Students know they have a designated academy counselor. Academy counselor(s) work with academy students, but may also have non-academy students if needed for counseling numbers. The counselors and non-academy staff are knowledgeable about the academy.</p>	
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<p><b>NSOP 5. Professional Development and Continuous Learning.</b>  <b>Since an academy places teachers and other adults into roles not normally included in their previous training, providing adequate professional development time, leadership, and support is critical.</b></p>			<p><b>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</b></p>
<p><b>a. Common planning time.</b>  <b>The site administrator ensures that academy staff are provided common planning time within the middle school schedule for purposes of program coordination, curricular integration, business involvement, and resolution of student challenges.</b></p>			
<p>Less than half of the teachers identified as being part of the academy team have common planning in their schedules. There is no evidence showing this time is used for program coordination, curricular integration, and resolution of student problems.</p>	<p>Approximately half of the teachers identified as being part of the academy team have common planning time weekly. Evidence shows this time is used for program coordination, curricular integration, or resolution of student problems. Evidence shows approximately half of the academy team members participate in the common planning on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Intentional scheduling of common planning is evident in the master school schedule, with weekly common planning for all academy teachers. Evidence shows this time is used for program coordination, curricular integration, and resolution of student problems. Rosters and documentation of attendance demonstrate the majority of the academy team participates in the common planning on a weekly basis.</p>	
<p><b>b. Professional development.</b>  <b>The middle school academy staff are provided with training in the academy structure, project-based learning, performance assessment, curricular integration, student support, etc.</b></p>			
<p>Evidence does not indicate adequate professional development for academy team members in the academy structure, curricular integration, and student support. Working with the unique needs of academy students has not been addressed.</p>	<p>Evidence indicates adequate professional development for approximately half of the team members in the academy structure, curricular integration, and student support. There has been limited training in how to work specifically with academy students.</p>	<p>Evidence indicates adequate professional development for all academy members in the academy structure, curricular integration, and student support. All academy staff have been trained in working specifically with academy students.</p>	
<p><b>c. Volunteer orientation.</b>  <b>Business, community, and high school volunteers are adequately prepared for their roles as speakers, field experience hosts, mentors etc. Parents are adequately prepared for their involvement (if any) in the academy as field experience chaperones, social event organizers, etc.</b></p>			
<p>A few of the external partners and advisory board members report they were adequately prepared for a few of the following: roles as speakers, field trip hosts, and mentors. Generally, the external volunteers did not report they received orientation, written guidelines, or were adequately prepared for their roles as academy volunteers. There is no evidence of business, community, parents, and high school volunteers and their activities.</p>	<p>Approximately half of the external volunteers and advisory board members report they were adequately prepared for the following: roles as speakers, field trip hosts, and mentors. At least half of external volunteers report they received orientation and written guidelines. There is some evidence of business, community, parents, and high school volunteers and their activities.</p>	<p>The majority of external volunteers and advisory board members report they were adequately prepared for the following: roles as speakers, field trip hosts, and mentors. They report receiving orientation and written guidelines. There is evidence of all business, community, parents, and high school volunteers and their activities.</p>	

<p><b>NSOP 6. Governance and Leadership.</b>  <b>The academy has a governing structure that incorporates the views of all stakeholders and the leaders of the advisory board.</b></p>			<p>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</p>
<p><b>a. Network of support.</b>  <b>The academy is connected to an advisory board. It has members from the district and school administration, academy staff, business partners, and postsecondary education. It may also include students and parents. The board incorporates viewpoints from all members.</b></p>			
<p>The advisory board is non-existent. There may be an informal group that meets sporadically.</p>	<p>There is an advisory board for the academy and includes members who are representatives from the high schools, district office, business partners, community, and parents. Evidence indicates the board may incorporate viewpoints from some of the members.</p>	<p>There is an advisory board for the academy and includes members who are representatives from the high schools, district office, business partners, community, and parents. Evidence indicates the board incorporates viewpoints from all members.</p>	
<p><b>b. Regular meetings.</b>  <b>Meetings of the advisory board are held at least quarterly, with defined agendas, outcomes, and meeting minutes. The advisory board helps to set policies for the academy. It also serves as a center of resource development.</b></p>			
<p>Minutes and attendance records from advisory board meetings are missing or demonstrate the board meets sporadically. Written agendas and outcomes are missing or not sufficiently detailed. The role of the board as a facilitator in policy making for the academy is not evident. The resource development role of the board is also not evident.</p>	<p>Minutes and attendance records from advisory board meetings demonstrate that the board meets no more than twice a year. Written agendas and outcomes exist, but are not sufficiently detailed. The role of the board as a facilitator in policy making and resource development for the academy is not clear.</p>	<p>Minutes and attendance records from advisory board meetings demonstrate the board meets at least quarterly, with clearly articulated agendas and outcomes. The board is chaired/co-chaired by an external partner. The role of the board in policy making and resource development is evident.</p>	
<p><b>c. A healthy partnership.</b>  <b>Through the advisory board and other interactions there is evidence of a partnership between the academy/middle school and its host community. There needs to be a set of By-Laws or a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that clearly defines all roles.</b></p>			
<p>The evidence submitted and conversations with advisory board members and other external supporting partners do not indicate a healthy partnership between the academy and the community. By-laws and/or MOUs were not provided and/or do not provide sufficient definitions of roles.</p>	<p>Evidence submitted and conversations with advisory board members and other external partners indicate a developing partnership between the academy and the community. By-laws and/or MOUs were provided, with vague definitions of roles.</p>	<p>Evidence submitted and conversations with advisory board members and other external supporting partners indicate a healthy partnership between the academy and the community. By-laws and/or MOUs were provided that clearly define roles.</p>	
<p><b>d. A student voice.</b>  <b>Students have avenues through which they can provide input to the academy policies and practices, thus providing opportunities for student leadership.</b></p>			
<p>There is no evidence academy students have a way to provide input to academy-specific policies and practices. Opportunities for student leadership within the academy are limited.</p>	<p>There is limited evidence academy students have a way to provide input to academy policies and practices, which needs to be developed further. Opportunities for student leadership within the academy are open to all students.</p>	<p>There is substantial evidence students voice is important, with students providing input to the academy policies and practices. Students participate in opportunities for leadership, through avenues such as focused conversations, student government, student productions, student ambassadors, classroom projects or other leadership roles.</p>	

<b>NSOP 7. Teaching and Learning.</b> <b>The teaching and learning within an academy meets or exceeds external standards and high school readiness requirements.</b>			<b>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</b>
<b>a. External standards.</b> <b>The academic curriculum is framed around the state and/or national standards.</b>			
The academic curriculum is not framed around state/national standards for high school, postsecondary, and career readiness.	There is written evidence the academic curriculum within the academy is framed around state or national standards. However, evidence of teaching and learning shows limited alignment with those standards.	There is written evidence the academic curriculum within the academy is framed around state/national standards. Evidence of teaching and learning shows clear alignment with those standards.	
<b>b. Rigorous learning.</b> <b>Coursework reaches high levels of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Upon completion of the 8th grade year, students are on track for matriculation into high school and are prepared for entry into freshman and/or career academies.</b>			
Review of academy coursework illustrates a course in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. There are no opportunities for high school readiness and career exploration. Less than 40% of the students are on track for promotion to the next grade level and/or entry into high school.	Review of the academy coursework illustrates a course in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. There are opportunities for high school readiness and career exploration. More than 70% of the students are on track for promotion to the next grade level and/or entry into high school.	Review of the academy coursework illustrates a course in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. All students participate in opportunities for high school readiness and career exploration. More than 90% of the students are on track for promotion to the next grade level and/or entry into high school.	
<b>c. Sequenced, integrated, and relevant curriculum.</b> <b>Curriculum is integrated among the academic classes. Learning illustrates applications of academic subjects outside the classroom, incorporates current technology and 21st Century Skills, and includes authentic project-based learning.</b>			
Integration, sequencing, and/or relevance of the curriculum are obvious intentional goals of the curriculum and instruction. However project-based learning is not embedded into learning on a regular basis. The use of technology is not incorporated on a regular basis. Relevant 21st Century Skills such as team work, problem solving and critical thinking are not intentionally incorporated into classroom work.	Integration, sequencing, and/or relevance of the curriculum are obvious. Project-based learning and the use of technology are embedded into learning only once during the year. Relevant 21st Century Skills such as team work, problem solving and critical thinking are not intentionally incorporated into the classroom work.	Integration, sequencing, and/or relevance of the curriculum are obvious intentional goals of the curriculum and instruction. Project-based learning and the use of technology are embedded into learning on a regular basis. Relevant 21st Century Skills such as team work, problem solving and critical thinking are intentionally incorporated into work.	
<b>d. Advanced academic credit and career exploration options.</b> <b>Options for high school credit are available for middle school academy students. Students are engaged in one or more self-awareness and career exploration experiences integrated in the middle school academy.</b>			
Students have no opportunity in middle school to earn high school credit and/nor participate in self-awareness and career exploration experiences.	Students in the middle school academy have opportunities to earn high school credit and participate in self-awareness and career exploration experiences.	At least 50% of students in the middle school academy have earned high school credit and 100% participate in self-awareness and career exploration experiences.	
<b>e. Stakeholder involvement.</b> <b>Stakeholders involved in the career academy have developed and/or reviewed the mission and goals. Additionally, there are clear benchmarks for assessing how the academy goals are met.</b>			

NSOP 7

<p>There is no evidence of high school planning or career exploration. There is no opportunity for academy students to develop a portfolio representing the academy focus or theme.</p>	<p>There is some evidence of high school planning and career exploration but not all students have participated. There is opportunity for student portfolio development, but it is not sustained throughout the academy experience. Less than half of the academy students will develop a portfolio.</p>	<p>There is evidence of high school planning and career exploration for all students. There is opportunity for student portfolio development and is sustained throughout the academy experience. All academy students develop a portfolio.</p>	
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<p><b>NSOP 8. High School, Business, and Community Involvement.</b>  <b>A career academy links middle school to its host community and involves members of the high school, business, and civic communities in certain aspects of its operation.</b></p>			<p><b>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</b></p>
<p><b>a. High School and Industry/Economic Needs.</b>  <b>The career academy explores career areas that relate to the future high school, and industry/economic needs of the community and state.</b></p>			
<p>There is no clear evidence of a link between the academy focus, high school academies, and relevant community industries/economic needs.</p>	<p>There is limited evidence of a link between the academy focus, high school academies, and relevant community industries/economic needs.</p>	<p>There is clear evidence of a link between the academy focus, high school academies, and community industries/economic needs.</p>	
<p><b>b. Community involvement.</b>  <b>Representatives of high school, business, and civic communities help to guide the academy’s curriculum, and provide experiential components such as guest speakers, real-world projects, field experience sites, shadowing opportunities, mentors, community service opportunities, and high school and postsecondary exploration.</b></p>			
<p>Each of the following resources or activities is provided to academy students, but each student only experiences one of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•career interest inventories</li> <li>•classroom or academy speakers</li> <li>•field trips/extended learning</li> <li>•job-shadowing opportunities</li> <li>•mentors</li> <li>•community service opportunities</li> <li>•high school exploration</li> <li>•postsecondary exploration</li> <li>•special events</li> </ul>	<p>Each of the following resources or activities is provided to academy students, and each student experiences at least two of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•career interest inventories</li> <li>•classroom or academy speakers</li> <li>•field trips/extended learning</li> <li>•job-shadowing opportunities</li> <li>•mentors</li> <li>•community service opportunities</li> <li>•high school exploration</li> <li>•postsecondary exploration</li> <li>•special events</li> </ul>	<p>Each of the following resources or activities is provided to academy students, and each student experiences at least four of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•career interest inventories</li> <li>•classroom or academy speakers</li> <li>•field trips/extended learning</li> <li>•job-shadowing opportunities</li> <li>•mentors</li> <li>•community service opportunities</li> <li>•high school exploration</li> <li>•postsecondary exploration</li> <li>•special events</li> </ul>	
<p><b>c. Citizenship.</b>  <b>The academy fosters a culture of respect for all others and encourages student contributions as global citizens.</b></p>			
<p>None of the student work, samples of project-based learning, or curriculum components incorporates an intentional focus on global citizenship, with emphasis on identity, loyalty and responsibility, and rights. There is no evidence of an academy culture based on respect for others.</p>	<p>It is not clear how the academy intentionally fosters respect for others or encourages global citizenship, with an emphasis on identity, loyalty and responsibility, and rights, on a systematic and/or intentional basis. There is limited evidence of how the academy fosters a culture of respect for others.</p>	<p>Samples of curriculum components, project-based learning, or student work clearly demonstrate that academy students are exposed to the idea of and encouraged to contribute to global citizenship. There is an obvious focus on creating an academy culture of respect for others and pride in diversity.</p>	

<p><b>NSOP 9. Student Assessment.</b>  <b>Improvements in student performance are central to an academy’s mission. It is important to gather data that reflect whether students are showing improvement and to report these accurately and fairly to maintain the academy’s integrity.</b></p>			<p><b>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</b></p>
<p><b>a. Student demographic data are collected.</b>  <b>These data include those necessary to describe the student body within the academy (e.g., grade level, gender, race/ethnicity) and its relationship to the middle school in general, as well as student performance on a variety of outcome measures.</b></p>			
<p>Data submissions for the academy and school-level populations are incomplete for most of the following demographic variables: enrollment, grade level distribution, gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch, special populations and sub-groups.</p>	<p>Data submissions for the academy and school-level populations are sufficient for most of the following demographic variables: enrollment, grade level distribution, gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch, special populations and sub-groups.</p>	<p>Data submissions for the academy and school-level populations are complete for all of the following demographic variables: total enrollment, grade level distribution, gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch, special populations and sub-groups.</p>	
<p><b>b. Multiple academic measures.</b>  <b>Measures include a variety of accepted indicators of performance (e.g., matriculation, attendance, retention, state test scores), as well as rubric-based assessments on performance tasks. Multiple measures need to be aligned to the state/national standards, and longitudinal data are collected.</b></p>			
<p>Data submissions for the academy and school-level populations are incomplete for the following outcome measures of indicators of performance: attendance, retention, state test scores, more rigorous coursework. The alignment of student outcome measures with state or national standards is not evident.</p>	<p>Data submissions for the academy and school-level populations are sufficient for the following outcome measures of indicators of performance: attendance, retention, state test scores, more rigorous coursework. The alignment of student outcome measures with state or national standards is somewhat evident.</p>	<p>Data submissions for the academy and school-level populations are complete for all of the following outcome measures of indicators of performance: attendance, retention, state test scores, more rigorous coursework. The alignment of student outcome measures with state or national standards is evident.</p>	
<p><b>c. Evidence of impact.</b>  <b>These measures indicate the impact of academy participation on student performance. Academy teams use student assessment to evaluate the quality of the education provided in the career academy and to make improvements to the curriculum, instruction, and program structure. Middle school academies should have well-defined student supports and interventions. Academy longitudinal data demonstrate the impact of academy participation in improved student outcomes in student matriculation, increased academic success, career exploration experiences, fewer discipline incidents, and reduced retention rates.</b></p>			
<p>The evidence does not allow the reviewer to make a clear determination of teacher use of academy data for impact on student performance. Improved student outcomes are not demonstrated by longitudinal or comparative (non-academy) data including matriculation, increased academic success, career exploration experiences, fewer discipline incidents, and reduced retention rates.</p>	<p>The evidence demonstrates some academy teachers use of academy data for impact on student performance. Improved student outcomes are demonstrated by some longitudinal or comparative (non-academy) data including matriculation, increased academic success, career exploration experiences, fewer discipline incidents, and reduced retention rates.</p>	<p>The evidence demonstrates the academy teacher team’s use of academy data for impact on student performance. Improved student outcomes are demonstrated by a majority of longitudinal or comparative (non-academy) data including matriculation, increased academic success, career exploration experiences, fewer discipline incidents, and reduced retention rates.</p>	

<p><b>NSOP 10. Sustainability.</b>  <b>No new academy functions perfectly. Even well established and highly functioning academies benefit from self-examination and refinement. Ensuring and improving the quality of a career academy requires engaging in a regular cycle of improvement.</b></p>			<p><b>Possible Evidence to Keep in Shared Folders</b></p>
<p><b>a. Academy implementation.</b>  <b>Program leaders regularly assess the academy’s functioning, studying its strengths and weaknesses. This involves gathering feedback from key stakeholders, including students.</b></p>			
<p>Artifacts and conversations do not provide a clear understanding of the process by which academy implementation is analyzed within a continuous improvement framework. There are no written outcomes of the process. Internal members and external partners do not have a clear understanding of this process. Not all key stakeholders are clearly asked for input regarding strengths and weaknesses. The process for following up on the feedback as part of a cycle of improvement is not present.</p>	<p>Artifacts and conversations provide an understanding of the process by which academy implementation is analyzed within a continuous improvement framework. There are limited written outcomes of the process. Internal members and external partners have an understanding of this process. Not all key stakeholders are clearly asked for input regarding strengths and weaknesses. There is an informal process for following up on the feedback as part of a cycle of improvement.</p>	<p>Artifacts and conversations provide a clear understanding of the formal process by which academy implementation is analyzed within a continuous improvement framework. There are written outcomes of the process. Internal members and external partners have a clear understanding of this process. All key stakeholders are clearly asked for input regarding strengths and weaknesses. There is a formal process for following up on the feedback as part of a cycle of improvement.</p>	
<p><b>b. Academy refinements.</b>  <b>All stakeholders, including students, regularly provide feedback and their input is considered. These data lead to plans to address any problems. Such plans include timetables and benchmarks for improvement.</b></p>			
<p>There is no plan for modifying academy design and/or implementation based on examination of current data. If refinements are mentioned, only a few of the academy stakeholders seem to be involved and the process is informal.</p>	<p>There is a plan for modifying academy design and/or implementation based on examination of current data. Plans to refine academy design and implementation are known to some, but not all, stakeholders. The plan for academy refinements lacks a specific timeline and/or benchmarks for improvement.</p>	<p>There is a plan for modifying academy design and/or implementation based on examination of current data. Plans to refine academy design and implementation are written and clearly known to all stakeholders. The plan for academy refinements includes a specific timeline and benchmarks for improvement.</p>	