

A Call to Action **Indicators Protocol**

Site Visit and ***Discussion Guide***



NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL
ALLIANCE

WASHINGTON, DC

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A Call to Action **Indicators Protocol**

Site Visit and ***Discussion Guide***

Prepared for the May 2006 National High School Alliance Partners Meeting in Providence, RI

Based on the National Academy Foundation Academy & School Profile 2005



The Vision and Mission of the National High School Alliance

The National High School Alliance is a partnership of nearly over fifty leading organizations that share a **vision** for a nationwide commitment to fostering high academic achievement, closing the achievement gap, and promoting civic and personal growth among all youth in our high schools and communities.

To advance this vision, the HS Alliance's **mission** is to engage its partners to work individually and collectively to inform policy, practice, and research, and to promote public awareness and engagement. The HS Alliance accomplishes this by providing a forum for professional discourse and collaborative effort to leverage its partners' resources, knowledge, and capacity.

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Integrated System of High Standards, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessments, and Supports

An integrated system of standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supports mandates common expectations for all students; clearly communicates parameters for success in each successive year of school and for successful transition into postsecondary education and careers; and outlines how students will learn, be assessed, and receive support.

SCHOOL-WIDE INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>School has begun to develop rigorous standards. Some courses use multiple measures and some students are learning to critique their own work. Student support systems are somewhat limited and do not yet align with system of standards and common assessments.</p>	<p>Rigorous, aligned standards exist for most courses and skill areas. Many courses use multiple measures and students are learning to critique their own work. Student support systems are being expanded and aligned with system of standards and common assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School has clear and rigorous standards aligned with curricula and entrance requirements for post-secondary education and careers; academic tracking has been eliminated ▪ All courses regularly use multiple assessments, including performance-based measures (e.g., portfolios, public exhibitions, capstone projects), that align with standards ▪ All teachers plan intended outcomes and assessment strategies before initiating a learning activity or project ▪ School explicitly builds students' capacity to critique their own work and learning process ▪ Accelerated learning opportunities are in place to help all students meet or exceed standards ▪ Literacy instruction is integrated throughout the curriculum in a way that is tailored to student needs

Observations and evidence

SLC, Academy, Magnet, Team or Themed PROGRAM INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>Program has begun to develop rigorous standards. Multiple measures are used on occasion. Some students are learning to critique their own work. Program-based academic support strategies are in the planning stages.</p>	<p>Rigorous, aligned standards exist for key Program courses. Multiple measures are often used. Many students are learning to critique their own work. Program-based academic support systems are being piloted by Program staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Program has clear and rigorous standards aligned with curricula and entrance requirements for post-secondary education and careers ▪ Program is open to all students in the school and actively recruits a student population that mirrors the entire school ▪ All Program courses regularly use multiple assessments, including performance-based measures (e.g., portfolios, public exhibitions, capstone projects), that align with standards ▪ Program teachers plan intended outcomes and assessment strategies before initiating a learning activity or project ▪ Program work explicitly builds students' capacity to critique their own work and learning process ▪ Program students can access accelerated learning opportunities to help them meet or exceed standards ▪ Literacy instruction is integrated throughout Program curriculum in a way that is tailored to student needs

Observations and evidence

Personalized Learning Environments

Personalized learning environments support all students by designing curriculum, supports, structures, and a learning climate focused on student needs, interests and development.

SCHOOL-WIDE INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>Some students and teachers are in smaller learning communities. Uneven level of curricular rigor and relevance exist throughout the school. School beginning to collect data and take action to improve student transitions, student-adult relationships and overall school climate.</p>	<p>Many students and teachers are in small schools or small learning communities. Explicit work on academic rigor and relevance is underway and resulting in increased student performance. Student transitions, school climate and student-adult relationships are improving as a result of focused efforts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School size and schedules support all students and all teachers with small learning environments (ideally 400 students or less in a 9-12 high school) ▪ All students provided with academically rigorous curricula that meet or exceed standards, are relevant to real-world contexts, and build on student and community assets ▪ A network of adults works together and with students to access the necessary academic and social resources through tools such as personal learning plans, academic intervention programs, postsecondary plans, and advisors for every student ▪ Interactions among and between adults and students are defined by trust, respect, open communication, and clear, shared expectations ▪ Transition from middle grades to high school is eased through pre-assessment work, orientation programs, and 9th grade support systems ▪ School climate is safe and welcoming to all students

Observations and evidence

SLC, Academy, Magnet, Team or Themed PROGRAM INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>Students and staff scheduled into Program program, but cohort may not be pure. Program courses are seeking ways to increase both rigor and relevance. Personal learning plans and student supports are in planning stages. Staff works explicitly on creating a positive classroom climate.</p>	<p>Students and staff scheduled appropriately into program. Academic rigor and relevance are evident in most Program courses. Personal learning plans and student supports are in place for many students. Positive, welcoming program climate is emerging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small learning community structure in place and features a pure cohort of students and team of teachers scheduled appropriately ▪ All students provided with academically rigorous curricula that meet or exceed standards, align with NAF curricular frameworks, are relevant to real-world contexts, and build on student and community assets ▪ Program staff collaborate to develop personal learning plans, academic intervention programs, and advisors for each student ▪ Interactions among and between Program staff and students are defined by trust, respect, open communication, and clear, shared expectations ▪ Student orientation and support programs help students new to the Program to succeed ▪ Program climate is safe and welcoming to all students

Observations and evidence

Academic Engagement of All Students

Academically engaged students are actively involved in disciplined inquiry requiring problem-solving, higher-order thinking, and the capacity to construct, rather than merely reproduce knowledge. Educators and students co-construct learning experiences that are relevant to economic, social, and political dynamics at local, national, and global levels. Curriculum and instruction value and connect learning to students' cultural and linguistic contexts.

SCHOOL-WIDE INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>Curriculum is still primarily teacher- and text-centered. Across the school, few courses use projects or attempt to incorporate issues of student interest. Themes are not yet explored by all students in meaningful ways. Limited flexibility in terms of instructional time and assessment measures.</p>	<p>Select courses engage students in projects that incorporate issues of student and community interest. Teachers increasingly attempt to differentiate instruction for all students. Themes are explored by many students. School beginning to experiment with flexible use of instructional time and multiple assessment measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All students pursue a rigorous, standards-based core academic curriculum ▪ All classrooms use project-based learning and other engaging, inquiry-based teaching methods that provide opportunities for students to master academic content, learn workforce skills, and develop personal strengths ▪ School has eliminated all non-academically rigorous courses and tracks ▪ All teachers differentiate instruction and provide supports that meet the varied learning needs of multiple student populations ▪ All teachers connect curriculum to real-world contexts that build upon student and community resources ▪ School has systems in place to provide all students with individualized guidance, information, and resources on career pathways and opportunities for participating in workplace-based learning ▪ School schedules provide for extended/flexible instructional time blocks ▪ School uses multiple measures to assess student outcomes, including performance-based assessments

Observations and evidence

SLC, Academy, Magnet, Team or Themed PROGRAM INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>The programs rely heavily on curriculum and assignments that lack real-world context. Teachers make few attempts to connect curriculum or support to individual student interests or needs. Themes addressed only broadly. Time use and tests mostly traditional.</p>	<p>Teachers regularly engage students in real-world projects. Teachers regularly connect curriculum and support to individual student interests and needs. Themes addressed throughout program. Time use and assessment practices are increasingly innovative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All Program courses are aligned with and support core academic standards ▪ Program courses primarily use project-based learning and other engaging, inquiry-based teaching methods that provide opportunities for students to master academic content, learn workforce skills, and develop personal strengths ▪ Program teachers differentiate instruction and provide supports that meet the varied learning needs of multiple student populations ▪ Program teachers connect curriculum to real-world contexts that build upon student and community resources ▪ Internships and workplace-based learning opportunities are in place for all Program students ▪ Program uses extended/flexible instructional time blocks ▪ Program uses multiple measures to assess student outcomes, including performance-based assessments

Observations and evidence

Empowered Educators

Empowered educators are those who are supported by their school community to continuously seek, share, and act on their learning in order to improve their practice for the purpose of improved student outcomes.

SCHOOL-WIDE INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
Professional development features workshops on effective strategies for instruction and assessment. Training may be somewhat episodic with limited teacher choice or input. Explicit work on building a “professional learning community” among the staff has begun. Time for collaborative planning is limited or not widely available for all staff.	Professional development is increasingly data-driven and teacher-planned. Staff is building capacity to reflect on their practice and implement solutions to improve. A collaborative professional culture is emerging. Schedule accommodates common planning time for teaching teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School builds teachers’ capacity to use data and research to inform instructional practice and to guide professional learning priorities and needs ▪ School empowers instructional staff with authority to define professional development needs and to make decisions about curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom environment ▪ All staff trained to differentiate instruction and provide supports to meet the learning needs of multiple student populations ▪ School works explicitly to build a collaborative professional community where staff analyze student performance data and their practice in order to improve results ▪ School schedule accommodates common planning time for collaborative development of curriculum and instruction, assessment of student work, and analysis of student performance data

Observations and evidence

SLC, Academy, Magnet, Team or Themed PROGRAM INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
Program teachers attend training on issues related to building a smaller learning community. Training may be somewhat episodic. Collaboration and trust are building within teaching team. Common planning periods are primarily used to discuss program logistics.	Program teachers beginning to use student performance data to guide training needs. Explicit teambuilding work is underway among Program teachers and trust is the norm. Common planning time is often used to analyze student work and plan integrated instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Program teachers have the authority to define professional development needs and to make decisions about curriculum, teaching methods, daily schedule, program budget, program staffing, and classroom environment ▪ All staff trained to differentiate instruction and provide supports to meet the learning needs of multiple student populations ▪ Program staff members work explicitly on teambuilding ▪ Program staff has common planning time for collaborative development of curriculum and instruction, assessment of student work, and analysis of student performance data

Observations and evidence

Accountable Leaders

Leaders at all levels of the program, school, and district must be accountable to, and work in partnership with, the communities and youth they serve. Accountable leaders resist the temptation of quick-fix solutions, choosing instead to engage stakeholders around the challenges of making schools responsive to and accountable for the success of all youth, including the most vulnerable populations.

SCHOOL-WIDE INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>Vision may exist but may not be shared or focus on success for all students. School beginning to analyze data and develop strategies to ensure all students succeed. Leadership taking steps to develop staff capacity for instructional leadership. Accountability systems are in early stages of development.</p>	<p>School working on refining vision by engaging all stakeholders. School improvement and reform efforts are aimed at closing achievement gaps. Staff capacity for instructional leadership is growing. Conversations about accountability have begun.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leaders and stakeholders create a shared vision of success for all students and to define accountability at each level ▪ School uses data to monitor and communicate progress towards the vision to all stakeholders ▪ School continually assesses the impact of reforms on all populations of students, particularly those traditionally marginalized such as English language learners and students with disabilities ▪ School uses strategic, systemic approaches to address both dropout prevention <i>and</i> dropout recovery for vulnerable student populations ▪ Staff works together as a “professional learning community” focused on student learning ▪ School recruits, develops, and retains leaders with the accountability to implement the shared vision and prepare all youth for college, career, and citizenship

Observations and evidence

SLC, Academy, Magnet, Team or Themed PROGRAM INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
<p>Program mission and vision statement exist, but may not focus on success for all students. Program is beginning to analyze data and develop strategies to ensure all students succeed. Team is beginning to work on instructional leadership. Program accountability systems are in early stages of development.</p>	<p>Program is working on refining vision by engaging all stakeholders. Program improvement seeks to close achievement gaps. Instructional leadership of Program team is growing. Clear standards and expectations are leading to accountability conversations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Program has a shared vision of success for all students; staff, student, and parent accountability is clearly defined ▪ Program staff use data to monitor and communicate progress towards the vision to all Program stakeholders ▪ Program staff continually assess the impact of their efforts on all populations of students, particularly those traditionally marginalized such as English language learners and students with disabilities ▪ Program uses strategic, systemic approaches to address both dropout prevention <i>and</i> dropout recovery for vulnerable student populations ▪ Program staff work together as a “professional learning community” focused on student learning ▪ Program team recruits, develops, and retains leaders with the accountability to implement the shared vision and prepare all youth for college, career, and citizenship

Observations and evidence

Engaged Community and Youth

All facets of the community work together to articulate a shared vision for all high-school-age youth and to establish a network of accountability that ensures progress towards achieving that shared vision.

SCHOOL-WIDE INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
School vision exists, but is not actively supported by all stakeholders. Community partners and parents have a basic understanding of school goals and performance data. School is beginning to reach out to traditionally marginalized groups. A handful of students sit on school improvement groups. Conversations about accountability have begun.	A collaboratively developed vision helps focus school improvement efforts. Community partners and parents have a solid understanding of school goals and know how they can help support student achievement. Many students and community members have meaningful roles in school reform efforts. A school-wide accountability plan has been developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students, parents, and community leaders engage with school and district leaders to articulate a shared vision for all high school-age youth ▪ Parents and civic leaders share community data and concerns with school and district leaders and provide resources and partnerships to support the articulated vision ▪ School and district leaders held accountable for allocating resources and establishing equitable policies that ensure all youth have access to quality resources ▪ School leaders held accountable for communicating data on student outcomes ▪ School works explicitly to build community capacity – particularly within low-income, minority populations that have been traditionally marginalized in civic and school affairs – to assume meaningful roles in the school reform process ▪ School organizes and builds students' capacity to exercise leadership and participate in decision-making that affects their schools and community

Observations and evidence

SLC, Academy, Magnet, Team or Themed PROGRAM INDICATORS

Early Development	Growth	Sustainability
Some program vision exists but needs broader input and support. Employer partners and parents have a basic understanding of Program goals and performance data. Program is beginning to reach out to traditionally marginalized groups. A handful of students have official Program leadership roles.	A collaboratively developed vision helps focus program improvement efforts. Employer partners and parents have a solid understanding of Program goals and know how they can help support students. Many students and community members have meaningful Program leadership roles. An Program accountability plan has been developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Program leaders work with students, parents, and employer partners to articulate a shared vision for all Program students ▪ Parents and employer partners share community data and concerns with Program staff and provide resources and partnerships to support the articulated vision ▪ Program leaders held accountable for allocating resources and establishing equitable policies that ensure all youth have access to quality resources ▪ Program leaders held accountable for communicating data on student outcomes ▪ Program works explicitly to have parents – particularly low-income, minority populations that have been traditionally marginalized in civic and school affairs – assume meaningful roles in the Program design and implementation process ▪ Program builds students' capacity to exercise leadership and participate in decision-making that affect the program

Observations and evidence

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Partners of the National High School Alliance

National Research and Policy Organizations

Achieve, Inc.
Alliance for Excellent Education
American Youth Policy Forum
Annenberg Institute for School Reform
Association for Career and Technical Education
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
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KnowledgeWorks Foundation
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National Council of La Raza
National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform
Pathways to College Network

State Leaders

Council of Chief State School Officers
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education
National Conference of State Legislatures

District & School Leaders

American Federation of Teachers
Buck Institute for Education
College Board
Consortium on Chicago School Research

Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform
Middle College National Consortium
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Career Academy Coalition
National Education Association
National Staff Development Council
New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Public Secondary Schools

Community & Youth Leaders

Chicago Community Trust
Forum for Youth Investment
National League of Cities
National Youth Employment Coalition
Public Education Network
Rural School and Community Trust
What Kids Can Do

Technical Assistance Providers

Academy for Educational Development, Schools for a New Society
Career Academy Support Network, UC Berkeley
Center for the Social Organization of Schools, Talent Development High School
Coalition of Essential Schools
Commonwealth Corporation
Cristo Rey Network
Education Alliance at Brown University
Institute for Research and Reform in Education, First Things First
National Academy Foundation
National Center on Education and the Economy, America's Choice High Schools
Southern Regional Education Board, High Schools That Work



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