National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC)
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Middle School Academy Rubric

Directions:

Please use this rubric as a collaborative tool with your academy team, leadership, advisory board and other stakeholders, to consider and monitor implementation of the academy. As you consider each item, consider the evidence you have, or evidence you need, to demonstrate meeting the criteria for certification. Please contact the review coordinator, Dr. Nicole Cobb, if you have questions, need clarification, or need assistance.

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Scores and Status
Model w/Distinction (106-108)
Model (96-105)
Certified (67-95)
In-progress (below 67)

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NSOP 1. Defined Mission and Goals. The career academy has a written mission, goals, and benchmarks. These are developed by and shared with administrators, teachers, students, parents, advisory board members and others involved in the academy. These include 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.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Middle school, college and career connections. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
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.	There is evidence of high school, postsecondary education and career connections in the mission and goals. However, appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are inadequate.	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. There are appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this components.	
b. Student aspirations. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no evidence 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.	The mission and goals reflect a commitment to maintaining student aspirations. However, appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are inadequate.	The mission and goals clearly emphasize the strong dedication of the academy to raise and maintain student aspirations and commitment. There are appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component.	
c. Student achievement. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no evidence of increasing student achievement in the mission. There are not appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component.	The mission and goals reflect a commitment to support students in maintaining and increasing their achievement. Appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are inadequate.	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.	

d. Commitment to equity. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no evidence of a commitment to equity in the mission and goals. There are not appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component.	The mission and goals reflect a focus on ensuring academy demographics represent the school population. However, appropriate, time-bound, specific, measurable objectives representing this component are not identified or are inadequate.	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.	
e. Stakeholder involvement. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no evidence of collaboration with relevant stakeholder groups in the development/review of the mission, goals, and associated benchmarks. There is also no evidence the mission and goals were communicated to, and known by, all relevant stakeholder groups.(Relevant stakeholder groups include, at a minimum, academy students, parents, faculty and staff, partners, and advisory board members.)	Evidence demonstrates limited collaboration from relevant stakeholder groups in the development/review of the mission, goals, and benchmarks; AND/OR limited efforts to make the mission, goals, and benchmarks available to the stakeholder groups relevant to the academy.*(Relevant stakeholder groups include, at a minimum, academy students, parents, faculty and staff, partners, and advisory board members.)*	Evidence demonstrates the mission, goals, and associated benchmarks were developed/reviewed collaboratively and included input from representatives from a range of relevant stakeholder groups. Evidence also demonstrates the mission and goals were communicated to, and are known by, all relevant stakeholder groups, not only the representatives who assisted with development.*(Relevant stakeholder groups include, at a minimum, academy students, parents, faculty and staff, partners, and advisory board members.)*	

NSOP 2. Academy Design. An academy has a well-defined structure within the middle school, reflecting its status as a small learning community.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Cross-grade articulation. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
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.	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 integration is realized is neither clear nor monitored.	The academy incorporates one or more grade levels. There is clear continuity within the teacher team through their curriculum and instruction. It is evident common planning time is given to subject integration.	
b. Cohort scheduling. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
Scheduling of academy students is arbitrary. There is not a clear plan for students to spend the majority of their classes together.	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.	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.	
c. Physical space. Where possible, academy classrooms are near each other in the middle school building. Rooms allow for flexible configurations required for project-based learning.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
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.	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.	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 and collaboration 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.	
d. Small size, supportive atmosphere. The academy maintains personalization through limited size, academy staff teamwork, and a supportive atmosphere.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	

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. here is no formalized process or structure to offer individual support for academy students. Neither academy students or staff seem to identify themselves	The academy is composed of a team of faculty that work primarily with academy students. There is a process or structure to offer individual-level support for academy students, but it is not formalized or institutionalized. The academy team utilizes its small size to provide individual supports to	The academy is composed of a team of faculty that work exclusively with academy students. Embedded within the academy is a formal, institutionalized process to offer individual-level support for academy students. It is evident academy students and team members feel a sense of belonging within the	

NSOP 3. Host Community and Middle School. Career academies exist in a variety of district and middle school structures which are important determinants of an academy's success.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Support from the Board of Education and Superintendent. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
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.	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.	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 evident.	
b. Support from the principal and middle school administration. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
The Principal and administration are knowledgeable about the academy but there is no evidence they embrace the academy or academy model as a defining characteristic of the middle school. There is not academy-specific administrative leadership.	The Principal and administration are knowledgeable about the academy, 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.	There is evidence 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 administrative leadership assigned to and instrumental to the overall and daily planning, functioning, and monitoring of the academy.	
c. Adequate funding, facilities, equipment, and materials. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	

| 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. | 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. | Adequate funding, facilities, equipment, and materials have resulted in supportive scheduling and operations of the academy. The district and administration have provided the needed support for the academy. | |

NSOP 4. Faculty and Staff. Appropriate staff selection, leadership, credentialing, and cooperation are critical to an academy's success.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Teacher Leader(s)/Coordinators. 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.			**Evidence**
0	1.55	3	
It is unclear whether there is an academy teacher 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.	There is at least one teacher who serves as the academy leader. This role is not clearly defined. Reimbursement of time or stipend for the role of team leader is not clear. The academy team leaders participates 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, parents, and students.	There is a strong teacher 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, parents, and students.	
b. Academy staff. 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.			**Evidence**
0	1.55	3	

Less than half of the academy team members report they willingly became involved in the academy. Evidence indicates some did not have a choice and were assigned to the academy. Teachers within the academy teach less than half of their classes (or students) within the academy. Less than hav of team members has relevant credentials for their roles as academic, themed, administrative, or support positions. It is evident most of the academy team members do not understand or support the philosophy and purpose of the academy. Less than half of the team members work collaboratively as a team, sharing duties of operating an academy.	Most 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. Not all of the academy team members understand or support the philosophy and purpose of the academy. It is evident approximately half of the team members work cooperatively as a team and sharing duties of operating the academy.	All team members report they volunteered and/or willingly became involved in the academy. 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.	
c. Support from the counselors, non-academy teachers, and classified staff. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	1.55	3	
Counselor(s) do not have a strong understanding of cohort scheduling, the value of the academy, or the critical role of a counselor. The counselors, non-academy teachers, and classified staff are unfamiliar with the academy and the academy model. Counselors are not specifically assigned to students by academy. Counselors do not provide student support in relation to academy specific counseling for high school readiness and career exploration.	Counselors are supportive of the academy, but there is no evidence of their academy support through academy-specific counseling for high school readiness and career exploration, and/or in a thorough understanding of cohort scheduling. Academy counselor(s) work with academy students and other students in the school. The counselors and non-academy are familiar with the academy, and may offer some informal support for daily operations of the academy structure.	Counselor(s) are intentionally assigned to the academy as an integral part of the academy team, there is evidence of their academy support through academy-specific counseling for high school readiness and career exploration, 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, and nare structured to offer specific support for daily operations and maintaining the academy structure within the school.	

NSOP 5. Professional Development and Continuous Learning. 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.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Common planning time. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
Less than half of the teachers identified as academy team members have common planning in their schedules. There is no evidence showing this time is used for program coordination, curricular integration, and/or resolution of student problems. Evidence indicates less than half of the academy team members participate in weekly common planning on a consistent basis.	At least 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, and/or resolution of student problems and indicates at least half of the academy team members participate in the common planning on a regular basis.	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, and indicates all of the of the academy team participates in the common planning on a weekly basis.	
b. Professional development. The middle school academy staff are provided with training in the academy structure, project-based learning, performance assessment, curricular integration, student support, etc.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
Professional development records indicate inadequate professional development for academy team members in the academy structure, curricular integration, project based learning, student support, and other relevant academy specific professional development for at least half of the team members. Self-report by at least half of the team members indicate inadequate training in the academy structure, (NSOP), project-based learning, curricular integration, and student support. There is no plan to on-board and provide professional development for new academy team members.	Professional development records indicate adequate professional development for approximately half of the team members in the academy structure, project based learning, curricular integration, and student support. Self-report by at least half of the team members indicates adequate training in the academy structure (NSOP), project-based learning, curricular integration, and student support.There is an a plan to on-board and provide professional development for new academy team members, but it has not been implemented.	Professional development records indicate indicates adequate professional development for all academy members in the academy structure, project-based learning, curricular integration, student support, and other relevant academy specific professional development. A formal plan has been implemented to on-board and provide necessary professional development for new academy team members.	
c. Volunteer orientation. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	

Less than half of the external partners and advisory board members report they were adequately prepared for their roles as speakers, field trip hosts, and mentors. Less than half of the external volunteers reported they received an orientation, There is no evidence of business, community, parents, and high school volunteers and their activities.	At least half of the external volunteers and advisory board members report they were adequately prepared for their roles as speakers, field trip hosts, and mentors. At least half of external volunteers report they received orientation . There is limited evidence of business, community, parents, and high school volunteers and their activities.	All external volunteers and advisory board members report they were adequately prepared for their roles as speakers, field trip hosts, and mentors. All external partners report they received an orientation. There is evidence of business, community, parents, and high school volunteers and their activities within the academy.	

NSOP 6. Governance and Leadership. The academy has a governing structure that incorporates the views of all stakeholders and the leaders of the advisory board.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Network of support. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
The Advisory Board for the academy includes members from at least the following categories: high schools, academy staff, and supporting employers. Less than 50% of the Board members represent non-school district employees. There is no evidence to support incorporation of viewpoints of members of the board in academy decision-making.	The advisory board for the academy includes members from at least the following categories: high schools, district office, academy staff, business partners, community, and parents. Less than 50% of the board is represented by non-school district employees. It is evident the board respects the viewpoints of most members of in academy decision-making.	The advisory board for the academy and includes members from each of the following categories: high schools, district office, academy staff, business partners, community, and parents. At least 50% of the Board members represent non-school district employees. It is evident the board respects viewpoints from all of the members in academy decision-making.	
b. Regular meetings. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
The advisory board meets no more than once a year. Written agendas and outcomes do not exist and/or do not align with the academy mission, goals, and benchmarks. Defined roles of the board in policy making and resource development are not evident.	The advisory board meets no more than twice a year. Written agendas and outcomes exist but are not sufficiently aligned with the academy mission, goals, and benchmarks. Defined roles of the board in policy making and resource development for the academy are unclear.	The advisory board meets at least quarterly, with clearly articulated agendas and outcomes aligned with the academy mission, goals, and benchmarks. Defined roles of the board in policy-making and resource development are evident.	
c. A productive partnership. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no evidence of a partnership between the academy advisory board, postsecondary, and community partners, but it is in the planning stages.	It is evident there is a developing partnership between the academy advisory board, postsecondary, and community partners. By-laws and/or MOUs include vague definitions of roles. The chair/co-chair is not a business or postsecondary partner.	It is evident there is a productive relationship between the academy and the advisory board, postsecondary, and community partners. By-laws and/or MOUs clearly define roles of the advisory board members. The chair/co-chair of the advisory board is a business or postsecondary partner.	

d. A student voice. Students have avenues through which they can provide input to the academy policies and practices, thus providing opportunities for student leadership.			Evidence
0	**1.875**	**3.75**	
There is no evidence academy students provide input to academy-specific policies and practices. Opportunities for student leadership are limited to no more than 5% of academy students, through avenues such as the academy advisory board, focus groups, organized student government, clubs, CTSOs, and/or leadership roles in co- and extra- curricular school based activities.	There is limited evidence academy students provide input to academy policies and practices. Between 5% and 25% of the academy students participate in student leadership through avenues such as the academy advisory board, focus groups, organized student government, clubs, CTSOs, and/or leadership roles in co- and extra- curricular school based activities.	It is evident student voice is important, and students provide input to the academy policies and practices. Additionally, at least 25% of academy students participate in student leadership, through avenues such as the academy advisory board, focus groups, organized student government, CTSOs, and/or leadership roles in co- and extra- curricular school based activities.	

NSOP 7. Teaching and Learning. The teaching and learning within an academy meet or exceed external standards and high school readiness requirements.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. External standards. **The academic curriculum is framed around the state and/or national standards.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
The academic curriculum is not framed around state/national standards for high school, postsecondary, and career readiness.	The academic curriculum within the academy is framed around approved state or national standards. However, evidence of teaching and learning shows limited alignment with those standards. There are opportunities open to less than 50% academy students to complete relevant awareness and readiness certifications (e.g., internet safety, keyboarding, career exploration, interest	The academic curriculum within the academy is framed around approve state/national standards. Evidence of teaching and learning shows clear alignment with those standards. There are opportunities open to all academy students to complete relevant awareness and readiness certifications, (e.g., internet safety, keyboarding, career exploration, interest inventories, etc.).	
b. Rigorous learning. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
Review of academy coursework illustrates a course in language arts, mathematics, science and social students. 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. 100% students participate in opportunities for high school readiness and career exploration. At least 90% of the students are on track for promotion to the next grade level and/or entry into high school.	
c. Sequenced, integrated, and relevant curriculum. **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.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
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 consistent basis. The use of relevant technology is rarely incorporated into learning 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 relevant technology are embedded into learning sporadically. 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 appropriate technology are embedded into learning on a consistent basis. Relevant 21st Century Skills such as team work, problem solving and critical thinking are intentionally incorporated into work.	

d. Advanced academic credit and career exploration options. 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.			Evidence
0	1.55	3	
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.	
e. Development of a portfolio. The student portfolio is created and sustained throughout the academy experience.			Evidence
0	1.55	3	
Less than 50% of academy graduates will matriculate to high school with a portable portfolio. There is limited opportunity for academy students to develop a portfolio representing what they have learned. There is no evidence portfolio development is an expectation for all students in the academy.	At least 50% of academy graduates matriculate to high school with a portable portfolio developed through the middle school experience. There is some work involving development of student portfolios, but it is not sustained throughout the academy experience.	All academy students matriculate to high school with a portable portfolio developed throughout the middle school experience. The portfolio reflects what their learning, self-awareness and interest inventories, and career exploration information, including identification of preferred high school pathways.	

NSOP 8. High School, Business, and Community Involvement. 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.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. High School and Industry/Economic Needs. The career academy explores career areas that relate to the future high school, and industry/economic needs of the community and state.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no clear evidence of a link between the academy focus, high school academies, and relevant community industries/economic needs.	There is limited evidence of a link between the academy focus, high school academies, and relevant community industries/economic needs.	There is clear evidence of a link between the academy focus, high school academies, and community industries/economic needs.	
b. Community involvement. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
The academy has minimal partners (employers, higher education, community representatives) who provide 1-2 of the following resources: •career interest inventories •classroom or academy speakers •field trips/extended learning •job-shadowing opportunities •mentors •community service opportunities •high school exploration •postsecondary exploration •special events	The academy has external partners (employers, higher education, community representatives) who provide at least half of the following resources: •career interest inventories •classroom or academy speakers •field trips/extended learning •job-shadowing opportunities •mentors •community service opportunities •high school exploration •postsecondary exploration •special events	All of the following resources or activities is provided by at least one external partner (employers, higher education, community representatives): •career interest inventories •classroom or academy speakers •field trips/extended learning •job-shadowing opportunities •mentors •community service opportunities •high school exploration •postsecondary exploration •special events	
c. Citizenship. The academy fosters a culture of respect for all others and encourages student contributions as global citizens.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no evidence academy students are exposed to the idea of and encouraged to contribute to global citizenship, nor a focus on creating an academy culture of respect for others and pride in diversity.	It is unclear how academy students are exposed to the idea of and encouraged to contribute to global citizenship. There is limited focus on creating a culture of respect for others and pride in diversity.	It is evident academy students are exposed to the idea of and encouraged to contribute to global citizenship. There is a focus on creating an academy culture of respect for others and pride in diversity.	

NSOP 9. Student Assessment. 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.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Student demographic data are collected. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
Data submissions for both the academy- and school-level populations are incomplete for most of the following demographic variables: total enrollment, grade level distribution, gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch, exceptional/special education, and English language learners.	Data submissions for the academy- and/or school-level populations are inadequate for some of the following demographic variables: total enrollment, grade level distribution, gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch, exceptional/special education, and English language learners.	Data submissions for *both* the academy- and school-level populations are complete for the following demographic variables: total enrollment, grade level distribution, gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch, exceptional/special education, and English language learners.	
b. Multiple academic measures. 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.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
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, rigorous coursework. The alignment of student outcome measures with state or national standards is not evident.	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, rigorous coursework. The alignment of student outcome measures with state or national standards is somewhat evident.	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, and rigorous coursework. The alignment of student outcome measures with state or national standards is evident.	
c. Data Analysis. Analysis of the data elements takes place in various settings to support student achievement.			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
The data are not analyzed by the academy team, leadership, or advisory board.	The data are analyzed by the academy team, leadership, and/or advisory board. The academy team analyzes academy data at least quarterly during common planning time. The data are analyzed and reviewed with the advisory board at least each semester. Analysis of the data results in recommendations for instructional changes and plans for student support.	The data are analyzed by the academy team, leadership, and advisory board. The academy team analyzes data at least monthly during common planning time. The data are analyzed and reviewed with the advisory board at least quarterly. Analysis of the data results in implementation of recommended instructional changes and plans for student support.	

d. Evidence of impact. 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.			Evidence
0	**1.55**	**3**	
Analysis of data indicates academy teachers do not use academy data for impact on student performance. Improved student outcomes are demonstrated by less than half of longitudinal or comparative (non-academy) data including matriculation, increased academic success, career exploration experiences, fewer discipline incidents, and reduced retention in grade rates.	Analysis of data indicates academy teachers use of academy data for impact on student performance. Improved student outcomes are demonstrated by at least half of longitudinal or comparative (non-academy) data including matriculation, increased academic success, career exploration experiences, fewer discipline incidents, and reduced retention in grade rates.	Analysis of academy and schoolwide data demonstrate improved performance averages for academy students. The degree of the impact of academy participation is evident based each on the following cohort measures: reduced retention in grade, increased academic success, greater career readiness preparation and postsecondary exploration.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.	

NSOP 10. Sustainability. 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.			Evidence to include in NSOP Documentation Folders
a. Academy implementation. **Program leaders regularly assess the academy's functioning, studying its strengths and weaknesses. This involves gathering feedback from key stakeholders, including students.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
There is no process for analyzing academy implementation within a continuous improvement framework. Key stakeholder groups do not provide input regarding strengths and weaknesses of the academy. There is no process for following up on any feedback the team receives.	There is a process for analyzing academy implementation within a continuous improvement framework. The process and results are not clearly communicated to and known by all stakeholders. Some stakeholder groups provide input regarding academy implementation. The process for following up on the feedback as part of a cycle of improvement is unclear.	There is a clear process for analyzing academy implementation within a continuous improvement framework. The process is written and known to all stakeholders. Key stakeholder groups, including students, provide input regarding academy implementation. The process includes follow-up on the feedback as part of the cycle of improvement.	
b. Academy refinements. **Regular assessments generate plans to address any academy problems. Such plans include benchmarks for improvement that reflect on an academy's mission and goals.**			**Evidence**
0	**1.55**	**3**	
Plans to refind the academy design and implementation are not evident. If refinements are noted, they are known to only some of the academy members, and/or stakeholders were not involved in the process. The process does not include a review of the mission, goals, and benchmarks.	Plans to refine the academy design and implementation are known to some but not all academy members and external partners. Plans do not clearly identify improvements, timelines, or the individuals responsible for carrying out the plans. The mission, goals, and benchmarks are reviewed but goals are not modified based on the continuous improvement process.	Plans to refine the academy design and implementation are written and clearly known to academy members and external partners. Plans for improvement include timelines and individuals responsible for carrying out the plans. Based on academy implementation and student achievement data, the academy's mission, goals, and benchmarks are reviewed and modified as needed.	