

Schools to Watch[®] / Criteria Rating Sheet

Rate your school on each of the measures below and cite evidence in space provided.

- 4 = High quality, complete, mature, and coherent implementation – NEARLY PERFECT, LITTLE ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT
- 3 = Good quality, incomplete, maturing, or not fully implemented by all – STILL ROOM FOR REFINEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT
- 2 = Fair quality, mixed implementation, immature practice, sporadic by some – SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
- 1 = Poor quality, low level of implementation, new program, by a few – CONSIDERABLE STRATEGIC PLANNING, CONSENSUS BUILDING AND IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

Academic Excellence: High-performing schools with middle grades challenge all students to use their minds well.				
CRITERIA	RATING			
AE1- All students are expected to meet high academic standards.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
AE2- Curriculum, instruction, assessment, and appropriate academic interventions are aligned with high standards.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
AE3- The curriculum emphasizes deep understanding of important concepts and the development of essential skills.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
AE4- Instructional strategies include a variety of challenging and engaging activities that are clearly related to the grade-level standards, concepts, and skills being taught.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
AE5- Teachers use a variety of methods to assess and monitor the progress of student learning (e.g., tests, quizzes, assignments, exhibitions, projects, performance tasks, portfolios).	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
AE6- The faculty and master schedule provide students time to meet rigorous academic standards.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
AE7- Students are provided the support they need to meet rigorous academic standards.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
AE8- The adults in the school are provided time and frequent opportunities to enhance student achievement by working with colleagues to deepen their knowledge and to improve their standards-based practice.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				

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Developmental Responsiveness: High-performing schools with middle grades are sensitive to the unique developmental challenges of early adolescence.

CRITERIA	RATING			
DR1- The staff creates a personalized environment that supports each student's intellectual, ethical, social, and physical development.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR2- The school provides access to comprehensive services to foster healthy physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR3- Teachers foster curiosity, creativity and the development of social skills in a structured and supportive environment.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR4- The curriculum is both socially significant and relevant to the personal and career interests of young adolescents.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR5- Teachers use an interdisciplinary approach to reinforce important concepts, skills, and address real-world problems.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR6- Students are provided multiple opportunities to explore a rich variety of topics and interests in order to develop their identity, learn about their strengths, discover and demonstrate their own competence, and plan for their future.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR7- All students have opportunities for voice – posing questions, reflecting on experiences, and participating in decisions and leadership activities.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR8- The school staff members develop alliances with families to enhance and support the well-being of the students.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR9- Staff members provide all students with opportunities to develop citizenship skills, to use the community as a classroom, and to engage the community in providing resources and support.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
DR10- The school provides age-appropriate, co-curricular activities to foster social skills and character, and to develop interests beyond the classroom environment.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				

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Social Equity: High performing schools with middle grades are socially equitable, democratic, and fair. They provide every student with high-quality teachers, resources, learning opportunities, and supports. They keep positive options open for all students.

CRITERIA	RATING			
SE1- To the fullest extent possible, all students, including English learners, students with disabilities, gifted and honors students, participate in heterogeneous classes with high academic and behavioral expectations.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE2- Students are provided the opportunity to use many and varied approaches to achieve and demonstrate competence and mastery of standards.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE3- Teachers continually adapt curriculum, instruction, assessment, and scheduling to meet their students' diverse and changing needs.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE4- All students have equal access to valued knowledge in all school classes and activities.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE5- Students have ongoing opportunities to learn about and appreciate their own and others' cultures.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE6- The school community knows every student well.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE7- The faculty welcomes and encourages the active participation of all its families and makes sure that all its families are an integral part of the school.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE8- The school's reward system is designed to value diversity, civility, service, and democratic citizenship.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE9- Staff members understand and support the family backgrounds and values of its students.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
SE10- The school rules are clear, fair, and consistently applied.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				

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Organizational Structures and Processes: High-performing schools with middle grades are learning organizations that establish norms, structures, and organizational arrangements to support and sustain their trajectory toward excellence.

CRITERIA	RATING			
OS1- A shared vision of what a high-performing school is and does drives every facet of school change.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS2- The principal has the responsibility and authority to hold the school-improvement enterprise together, including day-to-day know-how, coordination, strategic planning, and communication.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS3- The school is a community of practice in which learning, experimentation, and time and opportunity for reflection are the norm.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS4- The school and district devote resources to content-rich professional development which is connected to reaching and sustaining the school vision and increasing student achievement.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS5- The school is not an island unto itself; it is a part of a larger educational system, i.e., districts, networks, and community partnerships.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS6- The school staff holds itself accountable for the students' success.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS7- District and school staff possess and cultivate the collective will to persevere, believing it is their business to produce increased achievement and enhanced development of all students.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS8- The school and district staffs work with colleges and universities to recruit, prepare, and mentor novice and experienced teachers.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				
OS9- The school includes families and community members in setting and supporting the school's trajectory toward high performance.	4	3	2	1
Evidence:				