

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	INITIATING
<p>Students are often engaged in time-consuming, discrete skill-based activities that do not reach the level of rigor associated with the course's stated learning standards (if these in fact exist). Course-enrollment patterns reveal that low-achieving students from various demographic groups tend to be enrolled in less-challenging courses that are taught by new or less-qualified teachers. Teachers infrequently engage students in long-term projects, complex problem solving, and other tasks that require the application of knowledge and higher-level reasoning skills. Remedial courses deliver less-rigorous instruction at a slower pace, and underperforming students are not always given the additional time they need to catch up to their peers. Under-performing students, including special-education students, are often separated from their peers, reinforcing negative self-images of academic or personal potential.</p>	

3	DEVELOPING
<p>Most students are enrolled in college-preparatory courses, and the lowest academic tracks have been eliminated. Prerequisites for higher-level courses, including honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual-enrollment courses, have been removed so that any student can access challenging learning experiences regardless of past academic performance. Some teachers are collaborating to develop learning experiences and courses that lead to opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability to meet the school's college- and career-ready expectations that explore concepts from multiple perspectives. Student data are analyzed to identify underachieving students, and teachers are investigating and using intervention strategies focused on learning acceleration, but these support strategies are not yet integrated across the school community. Students are challenged to achieve at high academic levels, but may not be systematically supported in the development of academic behaviors.</p>	

5	PERFORMING
<p>All students access and participate in rigorous college preparatory courses. The administration and faculty believe all students can achieve the learning standards, and teachers collaborate to foster cross-curricular connections. Teachers take responsibility for building relationships with and challenging every student and see their role as instrumental in engaging and motivating students. Students are given time to investigate ideas in depth, and engage in performance-based demonstrations that blend foundational knowledge and complex thinking to support the transfer of learning. Student learning is measured against agreed-upon standards and scoring guides, rather than against peer performance. Students exercise voice and choice as they work independently and collaboratively to learn and demonstrate knowledge and skills at high levels. A variety of instructional strategies and consistent feedback allow students to develop academic behaviors such as how to self-regulate, persevere, and self-monitor.</p>	

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an X on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES

- Establish clear college- and career-ready graduation standards for all students.
- Develop common language and definitions around academic rigor and expected levels of performance.
- Collaboratively review student work samples and agree upon exemplars that illustrate quality learning. Share these exemplars with students so that they have a clear understanding of expectations.
- Engage staff in cross-disciplinary discussions about instructional strategies related to learning habits and how they provide opportunities for feedback and reflection.
- Examine all course sequences to ensure that they lead to mastery of the learning standards.
- Engage all students in long-term, in-depth lessons and projects, and engage community mentors and local experts in supporting this work.
- Treat all students as if they are college-bound: require every student to take a nationally recognized college-entrance exam (SAT, ACT), apply to at least one postsecondary-degree program, and complete the Common Application for Undergraduate Admission and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
- Offer a college-planning program for parents that begins in the ninth grade, and provide a variety of workshops and assistance strategies to ensure all families, especially those of first-generation college students, have the information and guidance they need to encourage, support, and finance their children's postsecondary education.

OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE

- Scores on standardized tests and local assessments are rising, particularly among traditionally underperforming student subgroups.
- The number of first-generation and low-income students enrolling in and completing postsecondary-degree programs has increased.
- The percentage of graduates needing remedial coursework in college has decreased.
- A high percentage of students graduate with a strong set of demonstrated academic and real-world skills, as evidenced by college acceptances, scholarships, grant awards, community-service awards, internship offers, or other recognitions and opportunities that are a direct extension of their high school work.
- Results of student feedback surveys show that students feel challenged, engaged, supported, and connected to their teachers.

OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION