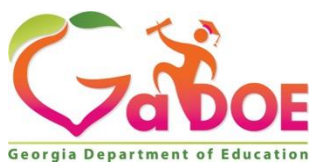


# High School Graduation Support Guide

Georgia Department of Education Guide to Review and Support  
Processes and Practices for High School Graduation Plans



February 24, 2020



# High School Graduation Support Guide

**Graduation Rate** – The GaDOE will support high schools in increasing high school graduation rates by ensuring:

- all high schools have a written graduation support plan in place
- graduation support plans are implemented with fidelity
- graduation rate percentages are tracked at defined intervals
- effective and consistent monitoring processes are in place
- graduation support plans are revised annually based on current data

To review and assess the processes and practices currently in place, use the following guiding questions with school and district leaders to determine appropriate next steps. Suggested resources are provided to support processes and practices in these categories: processes, academic coursework, attendance, discipline, graduation coach and/or counselor roles. When interviewing school staff or principals, use the guiding questions to listen or ask for specific data points and evidence as opposed to accepting general statements regarding trends.

Guiding Questions for Principal		
Question	Response	Next Steps
What are district expectations and support processes for graduation rate? Dropout prevention?		
What strengths and challenges attributed to the school's current graduation rate?		
Describe the early warning system that is being implemented.		
What is the current graduation rate projection? What current data supports this projection?		
Who monitors graduation rate improvement efforts? What is your plan for monitoring graduation rate? Who reports this information to the leadership team and how often is it reported?		
Describe the process for identifying root causes of attendance, behavior, academics, and course completion deficiencies?		
How does your School Improvement Plan address graduation rate?		

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Guiding Questions for Processes		
Question	Response	Next Steps
When does the monitoring of each cohort begin?		
Describe the process for tracking cohort data, including subgroups, and locating dropouts. Who is responsible? What supports are focused on specific needs of subgroups?		
Who is responsible for data entry – coding, withdrawals?		
Who trains those responsible for the above tasks and how often is the training?		
What are the expectations for the data entry person(s)? Who monitors entries for accuracy and how often?		
Who monitors students' progress?		
What data is reviewed in progress monitoring? (i.e., codes, numbers tracked, individual student names, contacts and interventions attempted)		
How often are the data points reviewed and by whom?		
Describe the incentives and recognitions that are in place to promote graduation.		
What is the process for contacting and documenting enrollment at the next school following a student's withdrawal?		
Describe the process for locating students who have withdrawn with unknown locations.		

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## Process Resources

### Georgia Department of Education Accountability:

[CCRPI Graduation Rate Targets Resource 2020, February 10, 2020](#)

[Cohort Graduation Rate Calculator, 2019](#)

[Redesigned CCRPI: FY2019 Data Collections Annual Conference, August 22, 2018](#)

[School Completion Toolkit, 2020](#)

[2019 Building A Grad Nation Report - America's Promise Alliance, June 11, 2019](#)

## Guiding Questions for Attendance & Discipline

Question	Response	Next Steps
Who monitors student attendance?		
Who monitors the attendance of cohort seniors?		
What are the indicators and processes to intervene on attendance?		
What incentives or recognitions are in place for attendance?		
Describe the leadership team's role in improving attendance, tracking graduation cohorts, and providing interventions.		
Describe the proactive measures that are implemented to reduce suspensions?		
What are the options available to keep students in school for less severe infractions?		
What interventions or supports are employed for repeat offenders?		
What is the process for maintaining academic progress with suspended students? ISS students?		

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## Attendance and Discipline Resources

### [Check and Connect](#)

Dropout prevention strategy that relies on close monitoring of school performance, mentoring, case management, and other supports.

### [Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools - WWC Practice Guide](#)

Provides school educators and administrators with four evidence-based recommendations for reducing dropout rates in middle and high schools and improving high school graduation rates.

### [Attendance Playbook: Smart Solutions for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism](#)

Provides practical strategies for improving attendance that have strong track records and are in many instances easy to introduce and simple to scale.

### [Six Ways to Improve Graduation](#)

Attendance and discipline practices for improving graduation rate.

### [Too Good for Drugs and Violence](#)

Curriculum designed to promote high school students' pro-social skills, positive character traits, and violence and drug-free norms.

## Guiding Questions for Academic Coursework

Question	Response	Next Steps
Does every student have a four-year plan that specifically focuses on college and career readiness? How often is it reviewed and by whom? Are parents engaged in the plan?		
How is course progression monitored and by whom?		
Describe the system for monitoring standards mastery. Common assessments, benchmarks, unit tests?		
How are mid-course interventions provided for students?		
How is course completion monitored?		
Describe the credit recovery process (when, where, how, etc.). Are there opportunities within the school day? How is effectiveness monitored?		

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Question	Response	Next Steps
Are there virtual opportunities for credit recovery?		
Are cohort potential graduates scheduled for courses needed to graduate on time?		
Describe the reteaching schedule and its implementation.		
How is access made available to those students for courses that are not on the master schedule?		
What career pathways are offered? What courses are offered within? How are students scheduled to be pathway completers? What input do students and parents have?		
Who monitors the course coding system to ensure that course numbers are current and accurate?		
How are students scheduled in a pathway? How are students scheduled to be pathway completers by graduation? How are students and parents included?		
Describe the master scheduling process.		
Are opportunities for intervention and credit recovery reflected in the master schedule?		
Identify and describe the opportunities for accelerated coursework (AP, dual enrollment, honors, work-based learning)?		

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## Resources for Academic Coursework

### Suggested Web Resources:

[Active Reading Strategies: Remember and Analyze What You Read - Princeton University](#)

[Active Learning Strategies - Berkeley Center for Teaching and Learning](#)

[Active Learning - National Dropout Prevention Center](#)

[Active Learning Strategies - University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#)

[Active Learning - University of Minnesota Center for Educational Innovation](#)

[Dropout Prevention Through Career and College Readiness](#)

National Dropout Prevention Center, Webcast December 12, 2017

[Evidence-Based Practices to Support College and Career Readiness in High School: Early Warning Indicators](#)

College & Career Readiness & Success Center

[Forum Guide to College and Career Ready Data](#)

National Cooperative Education Statistics System, May 2015

[Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: A Systems Framework](#)

The Center on School Turnaround WestEd

[Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System](#)

Achieve, November 2008

[Improving Graduation Rates through Virtual Schooling](#)

National Dropout Prevention Center Webcast, March 10, 2009

[IRIS Center - Peabody College Vanderbilt University](#)

[Learning By Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning](#)

Action Guide

[McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning](#)

[National Dropout Prevention Center](#)

15 Effective Strategies that have the most positive impact on reducing school dropout.

[Numbers Tell a Story: Using School Climate Data to Drive Student Engagement and Motivation](#)

WestEd Webinar, November 29, 2017

[Project-Based Learning: A Working Model for Student Engagement](#)

National Dropout Prevention Center Webcast, March 8, 2011

[Research Spotlight on Project-Based Learning](#)

National Education Association

[Scaffolding Writing Through the "Teaching and Learning Cycle"](#)

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WestEd, September 2017

[Systemic and Professional Development Approach to Dropout Prevention](#)

National Dropout Prevention Center Video

[Using Online Learning for Credit Recovery: Getting Back on Track to Graduation](#)

International Association for K-12 Online Learning, September 2015

## Suggested Books:

*Helping Students Graduate: A Strategic Approach to Dropout Prevention*; by Jay Smink & Franklin P. Schargel, Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education

*Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide to Building Exceptional Schools*; by Paul Bambrick-Santoya, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

*Teach Like A Champion: Forty-Nine Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College*; by Doug Lemov. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

## Guiding Questions Regarding Counselors and Graduation Coaches

Question	Response	Next Steps
Describe the role of the counselors.		
What are the expectations for counselors in improving graduation rate?		
What is the counselor's degree of accountability for school-wide graduation rate and for students on his/her case load? Describe the process for reporting out to administration/leadership team and determining next steps.		
Are data-driven objectives developed for the counseling program pertaining to graduation rate?		
How are students assigned to a counselor (loop with a cohort, stay on a grade level, take groups by alphabet, or other method)?		
Describe the role of the graduation coach.		



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Question	Response	Next Steps
Describe the wrap-around services that support students who encounter external issues that impact their academic success.		
How are parents engaged in impacting student attendance, discipline, and course progression?		

## Resources for Counselors and Graduation Coaches

[Career Academies - WWC Intervention Report](#)

What Works Clearinghouse, September 2015

[Career Cluster/Pathways Resource Page - Georgia Department of Education](#)

[Counselor Companion - Georgia Department of Education](#)

[Dual Enrollment Programs - WWC Intervention Report](#)

What Works Clearinghouse, February 2017

[Forum Guide to College and Career Ready Data](#)

National Cooperative Education Statistics System, May 2015

[Georgia Teachers-As-Advisors Framework - Georgia Department of Education](#)

8<sup>th</sup> grade Teachers as Advisors Activity

[Georgia Teachers-As-Advisors Framework - Georgia Department of Education](#)

9<sup>th</sup> Grade Teachers as Advisors Activity

[Georgia Teachers-As-Advisors Framework - Georgia Department of Education](#)

10<sup>th</sup> Grade Teachers as Advisors Activity

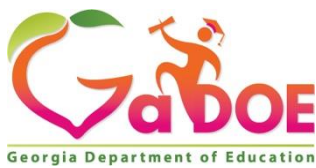
[Graduation Coach Suggested Roles and Responsibilities - Georgia Department of Education](#)

[Measuring the Value of a Strong School Counselor](#)

Harvard Graduate School of Education, February 19, 2020

[School Completion Toolkit - National Technical Assistance Center on Transition](#)

[Work-Based Learning - College and Career Readiness and Success \(CCRS\) Center](#)



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