NDPC-SD Data Probes Worksheet

This worksheet from the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD) is an optional tool to help schools organize multiple years of student and program data for the purpose of identifying school-completion needs that can be addressed through the implementation of research-based interventions. It is designed for use at the school building level. Another tool is under development for organizing and working with data at the State level.

The first section of the worksheet collects data about a school's enrollment, graduation and dropout rates for students with and without disabilities. The guiding questions in this section are designed to provoke thought and discussion about patterns and trends in the data, as well as current programs at the school that address graduation and dropout.

The next section, beginning on page 3, organizes the school's data related to academic engagement. It considers assessment data and academic targets as well as information about course-completion, instruction, whether students are on track to graduate in a timely manner, and grade retention. Schools may need to adapt the tables to reflect the particular assessments in use at the State or local level. If your school administers any diagnostic measures, you may also want to include information from these in this section.

The section on attendance begins on page 6 of the worksheet. The tables organize the data based on the number of days students are absent and on attendance patterns by grade level. The guiding questions are intended to stimulate consideration of, and discussion around the school's attendance patterns, policies and procedures.

Student discipline data are addressed on page 7 of the worksheet. The guiding questions for this section address discrepancies in discipline data between all students and special education students, and begin to examine the reasons behind patterns in the school's disciplinary data.

The section of the worksheet addressing parental engagement begins on page 8. It considers parent involvement with the school as well as the school's practices designed to foster parental engagement and the way in which the school communicates with parents.

The section beginning on page 9 gathers data about school climate, district/school policies and procedures that impact graduation and dropout, and professional preparation activities in the school. The guiding questions for school climate address the availability and participation in extracurricular activities as well as stakeholders' perceptions about the school. The guiding questions for district and school policies and procedures consider school-based factors that might "push" students to exit school prematurely. They also address school-completion initiatives underway in the school.

Transition-related activities and post-school outcomes are addressed on pages 11 and 12 of the worksheet. The guiding questions for Transition consider staff and agencies involved in secondary transition as well as factors related to the IEP. The post-school outcomes data table collects the same categories of information reported by States in their Annual Performance Report to OSEP, but disaggregates the data by graduates and all exiters.

Dropout Prevention Data Probes
National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities

School District _____ **School** _____**Date** _____

Enrollment

As appropriate, indicate your school's current enrollment.

Grade	Total Enrollment	Grade	Total Enrollment	Enrollment SWD ages 3-21	Enrollment SWD ages 6-17
6		9			
7		10			
8		11			
		12			

Graduation Rate (Indicator 1)

Indicate the *percentage* of students who graduated from your school over the last 3 school years.

Percent graduating	3 years ago	2 years ago	Last year
List the school years →			
Regular Ed			
Special Ed			
Gap			

1. Based on the above data, write 2 to 3 sentences to describe the graduation trend for your district / school.

2. What are your *school's* targets for graduation *this* year?

3. How many students graduated from your school with a *regular diploma* in the last school year? _____

4. How many students graduated with a *regular diploma* the year before last? _____

5. How many students graduated with a *special education diploma* in the last school year? _____

6. How many students graduated with a *special education diploma* the year before last? _____

7. How many students are currently *on track* to graduate this year… how many are students with disabilities?

8. Do you currently have a graduation initiative in your school? If so, how is it working and why?

Dropout Rate (Indicator 2)

Indicate the *percentage* of students who dropped out for the last 3 school years (*SY*).

Percent dropping out	3 years ago	2 years ago	Last year
List the school years →			
Regular Ed			
Special Ed			
Gap			

1. Based on the above data, write 2-3 sentences to describe the dropout trend for your district / school.

2. What were the dropout rates for different grades?

3. What was the racial breakdown of the dropouts across the different grades last year?

4. What group(s) of students in your school show(s) the highest dropout rates?

5. What other patterns do you see in the dropout data when you disaggregate it various ways?

6. What is the process for a student to withdraw from your school?

7. Do you currently have a dropout-prevention initiative in your school? If so, how is it working and why?

Academic Engagement

Data: Results for End of Course Assessments, State 8th Grade Achievement Tests, State Graduation Tests

As appropriate for your school, indicate the *percentage* of students in each assessment score range for the last 3 school years (*SY*). Please list the school years (e.g., 2008-09).

School Year	State 8th Grade *Reading* Test Regular Ed Students			State 8th Grade *Reading* Test Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

School Year	State 8th Gr *Math* Test - Regular Ed Students			State 8th Gr *Math* Test - Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

School Year	State 8th Gr *Science* Test Regular Ed Students			State 8th Gr *Science* Test Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

School Year	End of Course Test – *English I* Regular Ed Students			End of Course Test – *English I* Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

School Year	End of Course Test – *Algebra I* Regular Ed Students			End of Course Test – *Algebra I* Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

School Year	End of Course Test – *Biology* Regular Ed Students			End of Course Test – *Biology* Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

School Year	State Graduation Test - *Math* Regular Ed Students			State Graduation Test - *Math* Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

School Year	State Graduation Test - *ELA** Regular Ed Students			State Graduation Test – *ELA** Special Ed Students		
	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Doesn't Meet Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
SY						
SY						
SY						

* English Language Arts

1. Describe the achievement trend for your school based on the above data (decrease, no change, increase…etc.).

2. What was the school's target for reading scores last year? Was that target met?
(Note: This target is probably also the state target.)

3. What was the school's target for math scores last year? Was that target met?

4. What was the school's target for writing scores last year? Was that target met?

5. Identify pass/fail rate (Middle Schools) or identify course completion rates (High Schools). Look at pass rate of ALL students, SWD, and note any gaps that exist between the two. Are there "problem" classes (i.e., what classes had the highest failure rates?)?

6. As appropriate, identify the number of 6th and 9th grade students who are 1 or more years over-age.
6th graders _____
9^{h} graders _____

7. How does your School Improvement Plan address academic weaknesses?

8. What procedures are in place to ensure instructional fidelity (e.g., *How do you know what is being taught? How do you know research validated approaches and strategies are used consistently across regular education and special education classes?*)

9. What formative assessment is used to adjust instruction to improve student achievement?

Grade Retention

Data Source to locate information: School Report Card-Retained Students by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Indicate the *percentage* of students retained in K-12 by gender for the last 3 school years (*SY*).

	SY	Number and % Retained	SY	Number and % Retained	SY	Number and % Retained
Male						
Female						

1. What patterns are visible in retention rates?

2. What grades have the highest retention rates? What is done about this?

Attendance

Indicate the *percentage* of students by range of days absent for the last 3 school years (*SY*).

Attendance rates (percent)	SY	SY	SY
% of Regular Ed students absent 5 or fewer days			
% of Regular Ed students absent 6 – 10 days			
% of Regular Ed students absent 11 – 15 days			
% of Special Ed students absent 5 or fewer days			
% of Special Ed students absent 6 – 10 days			
% of Special Ed students absent 11 – 15 days			

Indicate your school's breakdown of attendance, by grade, for the previous 3 school years (*SY*).

	Attendance rates (percent)	SY	SY	SY
For Middle Schools	**6th grade**			
	7th grade			
	8th grade			
For High Schools	**9th grade**			
	10th grade			
	11th grade			
	12th grade			

1. What other patterns are visible in the attendance rate? (e.g., by gender, time of year, marking period, etc.)

2. What distinction does your school make between tardy and absent? (i.e., at what point is a student considered absent?)

3. How many days of unexcused absence does it take before parental contact is made? _____

4. What method(s) does your school use to notify parents that their child is not attending school?

5. Does your school currently have an attendance program in place? Does it incorporate incentives and sanctions? Are there multiple tiers of intervention?

Discipline

Data Source to locate information: Student Information System (i.e., School Max, SWIS, SASI), School Improvement Plan, etc.

Indicate the number of *discipline incidents* for the **last 3 years** and the number of *in-school* (ISS) and *out-of-school suspensions* (OSS) by *school year (SY)*.

	SY	Total #	SY	Total #	SY	Total #
Discipline Incidents						
ISS						
OSS						
Expulsions						

1. Total number of <u>ALL</u> students who had 5 or more disciplinary referrals from previous school year? _____

2. Total number of <u>SWD</u> students who had 5 or more disciplinary referrals from previous school year? _____

3. Of the total number of students indicated in #2 and #3, specify the total number that currently have a behavior support plan in place (per school).

    a. Elementary level: _____

    b. Middle School: _____

    c. High School: _____

4. What are the three most prevalent reasons for students getting disciplinary referrals?

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

5. What approaches might the school take to address these three issues?

Parental Engagement

Data Sources: School Based login systems (i.e., *website logs, sign-in sheets, parent surveys, other web-based structures, etc…*); Special Education records

1. What percentage of parents of SWD attends their child's IEP meeting? _____

2. What practices does your school have in place to encourage parents to participate in school activities or endeavors? (e.g. School Advisory Committee, Open House, Parent Newsletters, Parent Mentor, Annual Parental meetings)

3. What steps does your school take to educate *all* parents regarding the special education process and its potential benefits?

4. What is the average level of parental education in your school district? _____

5. How many parents volunteer at your school? _____

6. How are parents of SWD and of diverse educational/linguistic backgrounds informed of high school graduation requirements, transition plans, and prerequisites for post-secondary education options?

7. What avenues of communication does your school use to provide parents with information about school policies/reforms, and school programs (e.g., printed materials, recorded phone messages, personal notes, e-mails, home visits, mass media, etc.)?

School Climate

Data Sources to locate information: System and/or School handbooks, Club/Team Rosters, Title IV Survey (*Safe & Drug Free Schools*).

1. List all extracurricular activities for your school.

2. How many students participate in *at least one* extracurricular activity? _____

3. What instrument does your school use to survey student interests?

4. Does your school use a school climate survey?   Yes _____   No _____

5. If yes to #4, based on the school climate survey, do students generally perceive school as a safe and welcoming place? Yes _____   No _____

6. If yes to #4, based on the school climate survey, do parents generally perceive school as a safe and welcoming place? Yes _____   No _____

7. If yes to #4, based on the school climate survey, does school staff generally perceive school as a safe and welcoming place? Yes _____   No _____

District and School Policies

Data Source to locate information: Your school's policy manual

1. Describe the system in place to track dropouts.

2. Identify factors that may be pushing students out of school ("killer policies").

3. What training has your school's staff received on dropout interventions?

4. Identify opportunities where district, state, federal, and community prevention resources are pooled to maximize efficiency.

5. Which of the following interventions or programs are currently offered by the district to students experiencing academic difficulty: Mentoring; Peer tutoring; Alternative schools; Service learning; Credit-recovery program (e.g., online coursework); other(s) (Please specify)?

6. What systems are in place to review and monitor the effectiveness of the dropout prevention interventions or programs identified in #5?

Professional Preparation

Data Sources: District or school Professional Development Coordinator and/or Special Education Director

1. What procedures does the district take to help certify special education teachers in the district/school who are NOT "highly qualified"? (e.g., degree programs, contract courses, full-day workshops, workshops longer than 2 days, other)

2. Which of the following are taught to teachers during professional learning workshops/courses, to help them develop to better instruct youth with IEPs?

Instructional Strategies _____

Positive Behavior Support _____

Classroom Management Techniques _____

Assistive Technologies _____

Assessment Accommodations _____

Dropout Prevention Strategies _____

Transition-Related Activities

Data Source: State Exceptional Students Data, Special Education records

1. Identify the staff member(s) dedicated to the position of transition planning.

2. Is there an interagency transition council? What agencies participate in the council (e.g., Dept. of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation, Mental Health, etc.)?

3. How does the IEP process address factors that put students at risk for dropout?

4. Does the IEP include a coordinated, measurable transition plan for all students age 16 or above or who are entering 9th grade?

    Indicator 13: "Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority." *(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))*

5. Does the system have current present levels, measurable IEP goals, and appropriate supports for all SWD?

6. Are your school's IEPs centered on the student (i.e., do they reflect the student's interests, goals and plans for the rest of his or her life)?

7. To what degree are students involved in the IEP process (e.g., using a student-led IEP process with a focus on transition goals)?

8. What transition assessments are used in the school?

9. Does the school integrate academic content with career and skills-based themes? Are there career academies or other school-within-a-school models to support this in your school?

10. Does the school host transition fairs, hold career days, or provide opportunities for students to engage with local/regional businesses to learn about careers or gain work experience while enrolled in school (internships, paid work, or simulated job interviews)?

11. Has the school partnered with local or regional businesses to provide information and opportunities for students?

12. Are students provided with extra assistance and information about the demands (academic and financial) of college as well as available supports, including financial aid options?

13. Does the school provide opportunities for students to visit postsecondary campuses?

Post-School Outcomes Data

Provide post-secondary outcomes/transitions data for SWD who exited high school 1 year ago.

Category	Percentage of graduates	Percentage of all exiters
% of students enrolled in higher education after one year of leaving high school		
% of students enrolled in higher education **or** competitively employed after one year of leaving high school		
% of students enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; **or** competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.		