Data Collection Instrument
Supplement to

LAYING TRACKS
TO GRADUATION

**The First Year
of Implementing
DIPLOMAS NOW**

William Corrin
Susan Sepanik
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BUILDING KNOWLEDGE
TO IMPROVE SOCIAL POLICY

August 2014

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Introduction

This supplement includes copies of the baseline and follow-up school staff surveys. Administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers at all study schools — both schools that implemented Diplomas Now (DN schools) and schools that did not (non-DN schools) — were asked to participate in a survey during the fall of the first implementation year (baseline) and in the spring of the first implementation year (first-year follow-up). The following surveys are included in this supplement:

1. Baseline fall 2012 administrator survey (high school)

2. Baseline fall 2012 teacher survey (high school)

3. Follow-up spring 2013 administrator survey (high school)

4. Follow-up spring 2013 teacher survey (high school)

Similar surveys were administered to all middle school teachers. Questions included only in the high school survey are marked accordingly. The surveys included in this supplement were administered to school staff members at wave 2 schools. Similar surveys were administered to school staff members at wave 1 schools during fall 2011 (baseline) and spring 2012 (first-year follow-up). Most administrators and teachers participated in online versions of these surveys, but at some schools staff members could also fill out paper-and-pencil surveys.

This supplement also includes copies of the interview, focus-group, and observation protocols used during the case-study visits to a subset of Diplomas Now study schools representing 4 of the 11 school districts participating in the study. Case-study data-collection activities were conducted at the end of each school's first year of Diplomas Now implementation, at three schools in spring 2012 and four schools in spring 2013. The following protocols are included in this supplement:

1. District staff member interview guide

2. Principal/administrator interview guide

3. Teacher interview/focus group guide

4. School counselor interview guide

5. Program staff interview/focus group guide

6. City Year staff focus group guide

7. Parent focus group guide

8. Student focus group guide

9. Observation guide

Researchers visited each school for three to five days conducting interviews and focus groups and observing program activities. The intent of these site visits was to gather in-depth information about the experiences of a subset of school and program staff members, students, and parents during the first year of Diplomas Now implementation. Interview and focus-group protocols contain similar sets of open-ended questions tailored to each participant group and focused on topics including: implementation, collaborative activities, perceived impact, sustainability, and lessons for the future. All interviews and focus groups were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Principal Survey: Fall Baseline 2012

Your contribution to the Diplomas Now Validation survey is extremely valuable and will allow you to share your perspectives on student supports and initiatives in your school. This survey will be used to provide baseline information for the **2011-2012 school year.** If you have any questions about the survey or would like to request a copy, please contact Aracelis Gray (agray@icfi.com; 703-225-2290). Thank you for your time and contribution to this important effort!

Background Information

1. Please select your **CURRENT** role at this school. Please choose only one.
   - Principal
   - Assistant Principal serving the entire student population
   - Assistant Principal serving a subset of the student population
   - Other, please specify:_____

2. **At the end of the 2011-2012 school year,** how many years had you served as an administrator at **ANY SCHOOL**?
   - 1-4 years
   - 5-9 years
   - 10-14 years
   - 15 or more years
   - I was not a school administrator in 2011-2012.

3. **At the end of the 2011-2012 school year,** how many years had you served as an administrator at **THIS SCHOOL**?
   - 1-4 years
   - 5-9 years
   - 10-14 years
   - 15 or more years
   - I was not assigned to this school as an administrator in 2011-2012.

4. To what extent would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school **during the 2011-2012 school year**?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Goals and priorities for this school were clearly stated in a collective mission statement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Teachers were involved in decisions about school policies affecting them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

c) Parents/guardians and community members were involved in school activities. □ □ □ □ □

d) Parents/guardians and community members were involved in decisions about school initiatives. □ □ □ □ □

e) Parents/guardians and community members supported school reform efforts (planned or implemented). □ □ □ □ □

f) In general, morale among the staff was positive. □ □ □ □ □

g) Teachers worked together to improve instructional strategies and coordinate academic content. □ □ □ □ □

h) I knew the names of most of the students in the school. □ □ □ □ □

i) Educators used student data to drive instruction and target at-risk students. □ □ □ □ □

j) The environment was conducive to academic achievement. □ □ □ □ □

k) The student/teacher ratio in most classes was conducive to teaching and learning. □ □ □ □ □

l) In general, school facilities and equipment were well-maintained, clean, and operating properly. □ □ □ □ □

m) The supply of desks/chairs, textbooks, and materials was sufficient. □ □ □ □ □

5. **During the 2011-2012 school year,** were the following school interventions or resources in place at your school?

	No, not in 2011-2012	Yes, 2011-2012 was the 1st year	Yes, for two or more years
a) My school used an externally-developed school reform model.	□	□	□
b) My school was sub-divided into distinct organizational units (e.g., such as schools-within-a-school, thematic academy, or small learning community).	□	□	□
c) A designated adult at the school was in charge of coordinating intensive interventions and community resources.	□	□	□

d) A designated adult at the school was in charge of coordinating school reform efforts. ☐ ☐ ☐

e) A full-time, school-based Language Arts facilitator provided instructional coaching to teachers. ☐ ☐ ☐

f) A full-time, school-based Math facilitator provided instructional coaching to teachers. ☐ ☐ ☐

g) The majority of courses were extended periods (70 or more minutes). ☐ ☐ ☐

h) Students participated in academic and enrichment programs through an extended school day. ☐ ☐ ☐

i) Student curriculum included approaches for effective transitions to middle/high school. ☐ ☐ ☐

j) Students had the opportunity to receive individual counseling services. ☐ ☐ ☐

k) Students had the opportunity to receive group counseling services. ☐ ☐ ☐

l) Students had the opportunity to receive family counseling services. ☐ ☐ ☐

m) **For High Schools Only:** Classes were organized on a 4x4 + 1 block schedule (four extended learning periods and one-enrichment elective period). ☐ ☐ ☐

n) **For High Schools Only:** Students were engaged in work-based learning experiences (e.g., internships, job shadowing or school-based enterprises). ☐ ☐ ☐

o) **For High Schools Only:** Students participated in college preparation curricula in core academic areas (math, language arts, science, and/or social studies). ☐ ☐ ☐

	No, not in 2011-2012	Yes, 2011-2012 was the 1st year	Yes, for two or more years
p) **For High Schools Only:** Students were provided information about post-secondary opportunities and requirements.	☐	☐	☐
q) **For High Schools Only:** Students in danger of dropping out were provided opportunities for credit recovery.	☐	☐	☐
r) **For High Schools Only:** Students were provided remedial classes to enable them to catch up to their peers.			
s) Principals had the opportunity to participate in a principal/leader support network.	☐	☐	☐

6. During the 2011-2012 school year, did teachers participate in professional learning communities with teachers from the same subject areas?

   ☐ No, not in 2011-2012

   ☐ Yes, 2011-2012 was the 1st year

   ☐ Yes, for two or more years

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following activities took place at this school **during the 2011-2012 school year**?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Same subject professional learning communities engaged in COMMON planning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Interdisciplinary teams (i.e., teams of teachers across subject areas) engaged in COMMON planning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's academic progress to identify student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's attendance to identify student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's behavior to identify student needs .	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's course performance to identify student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
g) Interdisciplinary teams determined approaches to respond to identified student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. **During the 2011-2012 school year,** to what extent would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Teachers consistently enforced rules for student behavior in their classrooms.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Teachers helped maintain discipline in the entire school, not just their own classrooms (e.g., helping students transition between classes).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) The school had an effective system for providing positive reinforcement to students who met behavior expectations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) The school had an effective system for responding to problem behaviors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) The school had an effective system for tracking office referrals and problem behaviors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Students received instruction and guidance on school discipline policies and procedures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Educators conducted functional assessments and implemented individualized behavior plans as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Students with frequent disruptive behavior received a daily check-in with an adult to monitor their progress in meeting behavior goals as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i) Students interacted with their peers in a respectful manner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

j) Students interacted with teachers in a respectful manner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k) Teachers followed up with students and/or their parents when students had attendance issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l) Teachers followed up with students and/or their parents when students had behavior issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m) Teachers provided additional academic support when students had issues with course performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n) Teachers arranged for targeted and intensive supports for students' academic needs related to course performance (e.g., tutoring, mentoring) by making appropriate referrals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
o) Teachers arranged for targeted and intensive supports for students' non-academic needs (behavior, health, safety, social, emotional) by making appropriate referrals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
p) Teams of teachers met with an individual student's parents/guardians to provide assistance in meeting the student's needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. **During the 2011-2012 school year,** what types of volunteers were present in your school? Select ALL that apply.
   - ☐ Parents/guardians
   - ☐ Community members
   - ☐ Students from local college/teacher preparation programs
   - ☐ AmeriCorps volunteers
   - ☐ City Year Corps members
   - ☐ Others, please specify: _____
   - ☐ None

10. To what extent would you agree with each of the following statements about targeted and intensive supports provided to students at your school **during the 2011-2012 school year**?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Students were provided with programs and activities that promoted a positive school culture and climate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Students were provided with clothing, school supplies, and/or food as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Students were provided with health and wellness services as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) **High School Only:** Students were provided with information about career fairs, job shadowing, and/or internship opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) **High School Only:** Students were provided with information about college readiness (e.g., college tours, SAT preparation, FAFSA support).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. **In the 2011-2012 school year,** how often were students engaged in each of the following enrichment activities?

	Rarely/ Never	Monthly	Bi-weekly	Weekly	Daily
a) Topic-based workshops	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Academic tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Counseling services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Peer support groups	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Service learning and/or community service projects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) School-sponsored events (e.g., health expos or job fairs)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Rarely/ Never	Monthly	Bi- weekly	Weekly	Daily
g) Mentoring services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Behavior/anger management support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i) Sports clubs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j) Field trips	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k) Incentive-based events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for your time!

Teacher Survey: Fall Baseline 2012

Your contribution to the Diplomas Now Validation survey is extremely valuable and will allow you to share your perspectives on student supports and the work environment in your school. This survey will be used to provide baseline information for the **2011-2012 school year.**

If you have questions about the survey or would like to request a copy, please contact Aracelis Gray (DiplomasNow@icfi.com).

Thank you for your time and contribution to this important effort!

1. **How many years had you taught <u>at ANY SCHOOL</u>, either full-time or part-time? (Please do not include time spent as a student teacher.)**
   - [ ] 0-1 years
   - [ ] 2-4 years
   - [ ] 5-9 years
   - [ ] 10-14 years
   - [ ] 15 or more years

2. **How many years had you taught <u>at THIS SCHOOL</u>, either full-time or part-time? (Please do not include time spent as a student teacher.)**
   - [ ] 0-1 years
   - [ ] 2-4 years
   - [ ] 5-9 years
   - [ ] 10-14 years
   - [ ] 15 or more years

3. **What type of certificate did you hold in this state? Please choose ONE.**
   - [ ] Advanced professional certificate or National Board Certification
   - [ ] Professional, regular, or standard state certificate
   - [ ] Probationary, provisional, initial, or preliminary certificate
   - [ ] Temporary or emergency certificate (out-of-state, out-of-field, alternative)
   - [ ] Other (please specify):

   [   ]

4. **What was the HIGHEST degree that you earned? Please choose ONE.**
   - [ ] Bachelor's Degree
   - [ ] Master's Degree
   - [ ] Educational Specialist or Advanced Graduate Studies (at least 1 year beyond Master's)
   - [ ] Doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D., L.L.B., J.D., D.D.S)

5. **Please select the category that best describes your current position:**

☐ New teacher (this is my first time teaching) (THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE SURVEY)

☐ Returning teacher (I taught at <u>this</u> school during the 2011-2012 school year)

☐ Transferring teacher (I taught at a <u>different</u> school during the 2011-2012 school year (SKIP TO #20)

6. **In addition to your teaching responsibilities, which of the following describes the position (s) you currently hold? (Please select ALL that apply.)**

☐ Peer Coach or Teacher Mentor

☐ Academic Team Leader or Coordinator

☐ Interdisciplinary Team Leader

☐ Other, please specify

7. **During the 2011-2012 school year, which of the following courses, if any, did you teach? (Please select ALL that apply.)**

☐ Remedial, accelerated, or credit recovery <u>English</u> course

☐ Remedial, accelerated, or credit recovery <u>Math</u> course

☐ Transition course (e.g., Freshman seminar, navigating middle school)

☐ Special education course

☐ College preparation course

☐ Other, please specify _____

8. **High School Teachers Only: During the 2011-2012 school year, which category best describes the students you taught?**
(Please select ALL that apply.)

☐ 9th graders

☐ 10th graders

☐ 11th graders

☐ 12th graders

Middle School Teachers Only: During the 2011-2012 school year, which category best describes the students you taught?
(Please select ALL that apply.)

☐ 6th graders

☐ 7th graders

☐ 8th graders

9. **During the 2011-2012 school year, what was the PRIMARY subject of most of the classes you taught?**

- [ ] Math
- [ ] English, Reading or Language Arts
- [ ] Social Studies or Social Science (including history)
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Foreign Language
- [ ] Vocational-Technical Career Education
- [ ] Other, please specify: [＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿]

10. **During the 2011-2012 school year, how many of the classes you taught were extended period (70 or more minutes)?**

- [ ] <u>Most</u> of my classes were extended periods.
- [ ] <u>Few</u> of my classes were extended periods.
- [ ] <u>None</u> of my classes were extended periods.

11. **To what extent would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your experiences at this school during the 2011-2012 school year?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Goals and priorities for this school were clearly stated in a collective mission statement.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Teachers were involved in decisions about school policies.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
A majority of teachers supported school reform efforts (planned or implemented).	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
In general, morale among staff was positive.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Teachers worked together to improve instruction and coordinate academic content.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
I received adequate resources and/or professional development to implement new initiatives.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
The environment at the school was conducive to teaching and learning.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Parents/guardians and community members were welcomed to participate in school initiatives.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Parents/guardians and community members participated in decision making at the school.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teams of teachers discussed strategies for meeting individual students' needs with parents/guardians.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had concerns about students bringing weapons to school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had concerns about students using drugs and/or alcohol at school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had concerns about students being in-volved in gang-related activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. **During the 2011-2012 school year, did teachers participate in professional learning communities with teachers from the same subject areas?**
    ☐ No, not in 2011-2012
    ☐ Yes, 2011-2012 was the 1st year
    ☐ Yes for two or more years

13. **To what extent would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about experiences at this school during the 2011-2012 school year?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Same subject professional learning communities engaged in COMMON planning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interdisciplinary teams (i.e., teams of teachers across subject areas) engaged in COMMON plan-ning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's academic progress to identify student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's attendance to identify student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's behavior to identify student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interdisciplinary teams reviewed data on individual student's course performance to identify student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interdisciplinary teams determined approaches to respond to identified student needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. **During the 2011-2012 school year, how often did you engage in each of the following?**

	Rarely/ Never	Annually	Monthly	Bi-weekly	Weekly
I worked with administrators to improve instructional strategies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
School leaders (including peer coaches, mentors, and/or facilitators) provided me with instructional coaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A Math facilitator provided me with instructional coaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A Language Arts facilitator provided me with instructional coaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I collaborated with other teachers to improve instructional strategies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I received feedback/support from administrators and/or school leaders based on informal observations of my instruction.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I informally observed other teachers during instructional time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I collaborated with an interdisciplinary team of teachers who shared the same group of students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I participated in a professional learning community with teachers from the same subject areas.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. **During the 2011-2012 school year, were volunteers available to work with students in at least some of your classes?**
☐ Yes
☐ No (SKIP TO #20)

16. **During the 2011-2012 school year, how often did each of the following volunteers work with students in at least some of your classes?**

	Rarely/ Never	Monthly	Bi-weekly	Weekly	Daily
Parents/guardians	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students from local college/teacher preparation programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
AmeriCorps volunteers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
City Year Corps members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. **If you chose "other" in the question about, please specify which type of volunteers work with students in at least some of your classes.**

> [   ]

18. **During the 2011-2012 school year, what volunteer-led activities occurred with students in your classes?**
   (Please select ALL that apply.)

   ☐ Literacy one-on-one tutoring

   ☐ Math one-on-one tutoring

   ☐ Literacy small group tutoring

   ☐ Math small group tutoring

   ☐ Whole class academic support

   ☐ Whole class behavioral support

   ☐ Service learning/community service projects

   ☐ Topic-based workshops or curricula

   ☐ Other (please specify):

   > [   ]

19. **Over the course of the 2011-2012 school year, volunteers primarily worked with what total percentage of the students in one-on-one or small group sessions?**

☐ Less than 25% of my students

☐ 25-49% of my students

☐ 50-75% of my students

☐ More than 75% of my students

20. **To what extent would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about experiences with your students during the 2011-2012 school year?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I implemented behavior intervention plans for frequently disruptive students as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rules for student behavior were consistently reinforced by administrators.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rules for student behavior were consistently reinforced by other teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students communicated with their peers in a respectful manner most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students communicated with me in a respectful manner most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students took responsibility for their own learning most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students maintained academic honesty on tests or written exams most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students appeared to take pride in their schoolwork most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students put forth effort to understand difficult material most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students appeared to pay attention during my instruction most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students remained on task during self-directed activities most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students completed their assignments most of the time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. **During the 2010-2011 school year, how often did the following instructional activities occur in most of your classes?**

	Rarely/ Never	Monthly	Bi-Weekly	Weekly	Daily
Students worked in small groups or pairs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students worked on individual or group projects that lasted several days.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students were engaged in different learning activities at the same time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students used manipulative materials to illustrate concepts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lessons included applications to real-life issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students worked individually at their desks for at least half of the class period.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students worked on writing assignments or journal entries.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tasks required students to use critical thinking and reasoning skills to solve problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I assigned homework requiring students to interact with adults.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I analyzed student data to drive instruction and target at-risk students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was expected to deliver content I was not confident about.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
High School only: I taught academic content that blended career applications across academic courses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
High School only: I implemented a college preparation curriculum.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. To what extent would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your perceptions of teaching **during the 2011-2012 school year**?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I engaged in activities to learn about and/or get to know my students' families.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was accessible to students beyond class time for additional support with academic matters.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was accessible to students beyond class time for additional support with non-academic matters.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I arranged for intensive supports and interventions for students by making appropriate referrals as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I called students' homes when they were absent.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I frequently encouraged students to remain in school and/or provided additional support to students in danger of course failure.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for your time!

Principal Survey: Follow-Up Spring 2013

Your contribution to the Diplomas Now Validation survey is extremely valuable and will allow you to share your perspectives on student supports, interventions, and resources available in your school. This survey will be used to provide information about the 2012-2013 school year. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Your participation in the survey is voluntary and there are no penalties to you for withdrawing your participation at any time. All of your information will remain confidential; all information will be reported in aggregate and will not be linked to any individual respondent.

If you have any questions about the survey or would like to request a copy, please contact Aracelis Gray at (DiplomasNow@icfi.com). Thank you for your time and contribution to this important effort!

Background Information

1. Please select your **CURRENT** role at this school. Please choose only one.
   - [ ] Principal
   - [ ] Assistant Principal serving the entire student population
   - [ ] Assistant Principal serving a subset of the student population
   - [ ] Other, please specify:_____

2. Counting the **2012-2013 school year,** how many years have you served as an administrator at **ANY SCHOOL**?
   - [ ] 0-4 years
   - [ ] 5-9 years
   - [ ] 10-14 years
   - [ ] 15 or more years

3. Counting the **2012-2013 school year,** how many years have you served as an administrator at **THIS SCHOOL**?
   - [ ] 0-4 years
   - [ ] 5-9 years
   - [ ] 10-14 years
   - [ ] 15 or more years

For the next three questions, please complete using the option that best describes your school.

4. **During the 2012-2013 school year**, did your school have a Language Arts coach to provide teachers with instructional mentoring and support that was…
   - [ ] Working full-time in only your school?
   - [ ] Working at least half-time in your school?
   - [ ] Working less than half-time in your school?
   - [ ] Or did your school not have one?

5. **During the 2012-2013 school year**, did your school have a Math coach to provide teachers with instructional mentoring and support that was….

☐ Working full-time in only your school?
☐ Working at least half-time in your school?
☐ Working less than half-time in your school?
☐ Or did your school not have one?

6. **During the 2012-2013 school year**, did your school regularly track student-level data on any of the below characteristics in order to identify at-risk students?

	Yes	No
a) Course performance	☐	☐
b) Attendance	☐	☐
c) Behavior	☐	☐

7. To what extent would you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about your school **during the 2012-2013 school year**?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Goals and priorities for this school were clearly stated in a collective mission statement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Parents/guardians were involved in school activities (e.g., health fairs, fundraisers, sporting events).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Community members were involved in school activities (e.g., health fairs, fundraisers, sporting events).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Parents/guardians supported school reform efforts, both those planned and implemented (e.g., scheduling models, curriculum selection).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Community members supported school reform efforts, both those planned and implemented (e.g., scheduling models, curriculum selection).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. **During the 2012-2013 school year**, how often did educators at your school use student data to target at-risk students for additional supports?
   - ☐ Never or once a year
   - ☐ More than once a year, but not monthly
   - ☐ At least monthly
   - ☐ More than once a month, but not weekly
   - ☐ At least once a week
   - ☐ More than once a week

9. **(For High School Only) During the 2012-2013 school year**, how were classes organized at your school?
   - ☐ In a 4x4 block schedule (e.g., four extended learning periods per day).
   - ☐ In a 4x4+1 block schedule (e.g., four extended learning periods and one-enrichment elective period per day).
   - ☐ Into 6 or 7 periods of 45 to 60 minutes per period
   - ☐ Some other way (please specify:_____)

10. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** were any of the following school interventions or resources in place at your school?

	No, not in 2012-2013	Yes, 2012-2013 was the 1st year	Yes, for two or more years
a) Your school was sub-divided into distinct organizational units (e.g., such as schools-within-a-school, thematic academy, or small learning community).	☐	☐	☐
b) A designated adult at the school, other than the principal or the assistant principal, was in charge of coordinating intensive interventions and community resources.	☐	☐	☐
c) A designated adult at the school, other than the principal or the assistant principal, was in charge of coordinating school reform efforts.	☐	☐	☐
d) The majority of core courses were extended periods (e.g., 70 or more minutes).	☐	☐	☐
e) Student curriculum included a course in effective transitions to middle/high school (including topics such as strengthening study skills and improving behavior and interpersonal relationships).	☐	☐	☐
f) **For High Schools Only:** Students were offered opportunities to participate in work-based learning experiences (e.g., internships, job shadowing or school-based enterprises).	☐	☐	☐
g) **For High Schools Only:** All students participated in the same college preparation curricula in core academic areas (e.g., math, language arts, science, and/or social studies).	☐	☐	☐

h) **For High Schools Only:** Students were provided information about post-secondary opportunities and requirements**.**

  ☐   ☐   ☐

i) Your school offered appropriate services or referrals to students' parents/guardians who need them (e.g., literacy or English language courses, job and career information, etc).

  ☐   ☐   ☐

11. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how often did principals and assistant principals at your school have the opportunity to participate in the following:

	Never, or once a year	More than once a year, but not monthly	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Professional development activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Principal/leader support network	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Consider the main partner organizations that your school works with for reform or transformation. How often did each of the following activities occur **during the 2012-2013 school yea**r?

	Never, or once a year	More than once a year, but not monthly	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily	Your school did not work with partner organizations in 2012-2013
a) You communicated with these partners (e.g., through email, phone, or in person)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Your school's partners met with the school's leadership team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Never, or once a year	More than once a year, but not monthly	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily	Your school did not work with partner organizations in 2012-2013
c) School leadership shared data with the school's partners to help drive collective work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. Did the main partner organizations that your school works with external partners participate in the school's decision-making process?
    a) Yes
    b) No
    c) Your school did not work with partner organizations **during the 2012-2013 school year**

14. For the following questions, please respond "yes" or "no" as appropriate for your school **during this 2012-2013 school year**.

	Yes	No
a) Did educators conduct functional assessment of behavior as needed?	☐	☐
b) Did educators implement individualized behavior plans as needed?	☐	☐
c) Did students with frequent disruptive behavior receive a daily check-in with an adult to monitor their progress in meeting behavior goals as needed?	☐	☐
d) Were students identified as at-risk provided with an individual case plan that could be used to set goals and monitor progress in meeting those goals?	☐	☐

15. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how often did teachers, or other staff at your school, do the following?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always, when needed
a) Followed up with students when they had attendance issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Followed up with students when they had behavior issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

c) Arranged for targeted and intensive supports for students' academic needs related to course performance (e.g., tutoring, mentoring) by making the appropriate referrals. □ □ □ □ □

d) Arranged for targeted and intensive supports for students' non-academic needs (e.g., behavior, health, safety, social, and emotional) by making appropriate referrals. □ □ □ □ □

e) Invited parents/guardians to meet and discuss strategies for responding to individual students' needs. □ □ □ □ □

16. **During the PAST MONTH**, how often did **teachers** engage in the following activities at your school?

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Same subject professional learning communities engaged in COMMON planning.	□	□	□	□	□	□
b) Interdisciplinary teams (i.e., teams of teachers across subject areas) engaged in COMMON planning.	□	□	□	□	□	□
c) Teams of teachers reviewed data on individual students' academic progress and/or course performance to identify student needs.	□	□	□	□	□	□
d) Teams of teachers reviewed data on individual students' attendance to identify student needs.	□	□	□	□	□	□
e) Teams of teachers reviewed data on individual students' behavior to identify student needs.	□	□	□	□	□	□
f) Teams of teachers determined approaches to respond to identified student needs.	□	□	□	□	□	□

17. **During the PAST MONTH**, how often have each of the following volunteers worked with students at your school?

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Parents or guardians	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Students from a local college/teacher preparation programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) City Year corps members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Members of organized volunteer programs or other AmeriCorps members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Peer tutors (students from other classes in the school)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Other community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Other (please specify:) _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. **During the PAST MONTH**, how often did, teachers, other staff members, or volunteers at the school do the following activities:

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Provided additional academic support when students had issues with course performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Called parents to talk about students' academic, behavioral, and/or attendance issues or progress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how frequently were the following supports provided to students at your school?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always, when needed
a) Students were provided with clothing, school supplies, and/or food as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Students were provided with health and wellness services as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Students were provided with mental health services as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) **High School Only:** Information about career fairs, job shadowing, and/or internship opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) **High School Only:** Information about college readiness (e.g., college tours, SAT preparation, FAFSA support).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Programs and activities designed to promote a positive school culture and climate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how often were students offered opportunities to participate in each of the following activities?

	Rarely	Monthly	Bi-weekly	Weekly	Daily
a) Academic tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Individual counseling	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Group counseling	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Family counseling	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Service learning and/or community service projects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Mentoring services from college students or recent graduates who can act as role models	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Behavior/anger management support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how often were academic enrichment opportunities (including homework help, service learning, tutoring, test preparation, etc.) offered to students outside of normal school hours?
- [ ] Never or once a year
- [ ] More than once a year, but not monthly
- [ ] At least monthly
- [ ] More than once a month, but not weekly
- [ ] At least once a week
- [ ] More than once a week, but not daily
- [ ] Daily

22. **During the 2011-2012 school year,** how often did your school sponsor events that included participation from families and/or community members (e.g. health expos, job fairs, science fairs, theatrical productions, music events, etc.)?
- [ ] Never or once a year
- [ ] More than once a year, but not monthly
- [ ] At least monthly
- [ ] More than once a month, but not weekly
- [ ] At least once a week
- [ ] More than once a week, but not daily
- [ ] Daily

23. Please share any additional comments about supports, initiatives, and resources at your school:

_____

Thank you for your time!

Teacher Survey: Follow-Up Spring 2013

Your contribution to the Diplomas Now Validation survey is extremely valuable and will allow you to share your perspectives on student supports, interventions, and the resources available in your school. This survey will be used to provide information about the **2012-2013 school year.** The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Your participation in the survey is voluntary and there are no penalties to you for withdrawing your participation at any time. All of your information will remain confidential; data will be reported in aggregate and will not be linked to any individual respondent.

If you have questions about the survey or would like to request a copy, please contact Aracelis Gray (agray@icfi.com; 703-225-2290). Thank you for your time and contribution to this important effort!

Background Information (All Teachers)

1. Counting the **2012-2013 school year**, how many years have you taught at **ANY SCHOOL**, either full-time or part-time? Please do not include time spent as a student teacher.
   - [ ] 0-4 years
   - [ ] 5-9 years
   - [ ] 10-14 years
   - [ ] 15 or more years

2. Counting the **2012-2013 school year**, how many years have you taught at **THIS SCHOOL**, either full-time or part-time? Please do not include time spent as a student teacher.
   - [ ] 0-4 years
   - [ ] 5-9 years
   - [ ] 10-14 years
   - [ ] 15 or more years

3. What type of certificate do you hold in this state? Please choose ONE.
   - [ ] Advanced professional certificate or National Board Certification
   - [ ] Professional, regular, or standard state certificate
   - [ ] Probationary, provisional, initial, or preliminary state certificate
   - [ ] Temporary or emergency certificate (e.g., out-of-state, out-of-field, alternative)
   - [ ] Other, please specify: _____

4. What is the HIGHEST degree you have earned? Please choose ONE.
   - [ ] Bachelor's Degree
   - [ ] Master's Degree
   - [ ] Educational Specialist or Advanced Graduate Studies (at least 1 year beyond Master's)
   - [ ] Doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D., L.L.B., J.D., D.D.S)

5. Which of the following describes the position(s) you hold? Select ALL that apply.

- [ ] Full-time Classroom Teacher
- [ ] Part-time Classroom Teacher
- [ ] Peer Coach or Teacher Mentor
- [ ] Academic Team Leader or Coordinator (grade level or department chair)
- [ ] Interdisciplinary Team Leader
- [ ] Other, please specify _____

6. What is the PRIMARY subject of most of the classes you have taught **during the 2012-2013 school year**?   Please choose ONE.

- [ ] Math
- [ ] English, Reading or Language Arts
- [ ] Social Studies or Social Science (including history)
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Foreign Language
- [ ] Vocational-Technical Career Education
- [ ] Other, please specify: _____

7. Which of the following types of courses, **if any**, have you taught **during the 2012-2013 school year**?
Please select ALL that apply.

- [ ] Remedial or credit recovery <u>English</u> course
- [ ] Accelerated <u>English</u> course
- [ ] Remedial or credit recovery <u>Math</u> course
- [ ] Accelerated <u>Math</u> course
- [ ] Transition course (e.g., Freshman seminar, navigating middle school)
- [ ] Special education course
- [ ] College preparation course
- [ ] I did NOT teach any of these types of courses in the **2012-2013** school year.

For High School Teachers Only:
8. Which category/categories describes the students you have taught **during the 2012-2013 school year**?
Please select ALL that apply.

- [ ] 9th graders
- [ ] 10th graders
- [ ] 11th graders
- [ ] 12th graders

For Middle School Teachers Only:

8. Which category/categories describe the students you have taught **during the 2012-2013 school year**?

Please select ALL that apply.

- [ ] 6th graders
- [ ] 7th graders
- [ ] 8th graders

9. **During the 2012-2013 school year**, were you a member of an interdisciplinary team (i.e., a team of teachers across subject areas), organizational academy, and/or small learning community?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

10. To what extent would you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about your experiences at this school **during the 2012-2013 school year**?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) The environment at this school was conducive to teaching and learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Parents/guardians were involved in school activities (e.g., health fairs, fundraisers, sporting events).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Community members were involved in school activities (e.g., health fairs, fundraisers, sporting events).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Parents/guardians supported school reform efforts, both those planned and implemented (e.g., scheduling models, curriculum selection).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Community members supported school reform efforts, both those planned and implemented (e.g., scheduling models, curriculum selection).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Your school helped all parents understand what they could do at home to support a student's success in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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11. **During the 2012-2013 school year**, how often did each of the following occur?

	Never, or once a year	More than once a year, but not monthly	At least monthly	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Parents/guardians and other community members were offered opportunities to participate in school initiatives.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Parents/guardians were invited to meetings with teams of teachers to discuss strategies for meeting individual students' needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) You or other adults at your school provided additional support to students related to attendance such as calling absent students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how many of the classes that you taught were extended periods (70-90 minutes)?

☐ None of my classes were extended periods.
☐ Few of my classes were extended periods.
☐ Most of my classes were extended periods.

13. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how often did the following occur at your school?

	Never, or once a year	More than once a year, but not monthly	At least monthly	More than once a month, but not weekly	At least once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily	Not occurring in your school 2012-2013
a) School leaders (including peer coaches, mentors, and/or facilitators) provided you with instructional mentoring and support.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
b) A Math coach provided you with instructional mentoring and support.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
c) A Language Arts coach provided you with instructional mentoring and support.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
d) You participated in a professional learning community with teachers from the same subject area.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
e) You collaborated with an interdisciplinary team of teachers who shared the same group of students.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
f) You met with non-teaching professionals (including school administrators, coaches, specialists, case managers and/or counselors) to identify at-risk students and/or plan interventions for those students.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

14. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** how many hours did you spend **EACH WEEK** participating in the following activities at your school?

	None	Less than 1 hour a week	1-2 hours each week	2-3 hours each week	More than 3 hours each week	Not occur-ring in your school 2012-2013
a) COMMON planning with same subject professional learning communities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) COMMON planning with an interdisciplinary team of teachers that shared the same students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Reviewing student data with an interdisciplinary team of teachers to identify student needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Collaborating with an interdisciplinary team of teachers to determine approaches to respond to student needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Teaching academic content coordinated across an inter-disciplinary team, academy, or small learning community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. **During the PAST MONTH,** how often did you analyze the following types of data to target at-risk students?

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	Once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Course performance data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Student attendance data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Student behavior data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. **During the PAST MONTH,** how often did each of the following volunteers work with students in at least some of your classes?

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	Once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Parents/guardians	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Students from local college/teacher preparation programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) City Years corps members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Members of organized volunteer programs or other AmeriCorps members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Peer tutors (students from other classes in the school)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Other community members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Others, please specify:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. **During the PAST MONTH**, how often did each of the following volunteer activities occur with students in your classes?

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	Once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Literacy one-on-one tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Math one-on-one tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	Once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
c) Literacy small group tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Math small group tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Whole class academic support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Whole class behavioral support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Service learning/community service projects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h) Topic-based work-shops or curricula	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i) Homework and assignment completion support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. **During the PAST MONTH,** how often did the following instructional activities occur in most of your classes?

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	Once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
a) Students worked in small groups or pairs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Students worked on individual or group projects that lasted several days.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Students were engaged in different learning activities at the same time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Students used manipulative materials to illustrate concepts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Students applied classroom activities to real-life issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Students worked individually at their desks on worksheets for at least half of the class period.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Never	At least once a month	More than once a month, but not weekly	Once a week	More than once a week, but not daily	Daily
g) Students worked on writing assignments or journal entries.	□	□	□	□	□	□
h) Students worked on homework assignments during class.	□	□	□	□	□	□
i) Tasks required students to use critical thinking and reasoning skills to solve problems.	□	□	□	□	□	□
j) You assigned homework requiring students to interact with adults.	□	□	□	□	□	□
k) You provided demonstrations, modeling of strategies, and mini-lessons.	□	□	□	□	□	□
l) Students participated in one-on-one or small group tutoring during your classes.	□	□	□	□	□	□
m) **For High Schools Only:** You taught academic content that blended career applications across academic courses.	□	□	□	□	□	□
n) **For High Schools Only:** You taught a curriculum that included career exploration and planning for college.	□	□	□	□	□	□

19. Please indicate "yes" or "no" to the following statements describing your school or your teaching **during the 2012-2013 school year.**

	Yes	No	Don't know/ Does not apply
a) Students who were struggling in math received a "double dose" of math or a supplemental math course to help them catch up to their classmates.	□	□	□
b) Students who were struggling in reading were received a "double dose" of language arts or a supplemental literacy course to help them catch up to their classmates.	□	□	□

	Yes	No	Don't know/ Does not apply
c) **For High Schools Only:** You implemented the same college preparation curriculum for all students in your classes.	☐	☐	☐

20. To the best of your ability, please indicate how frequently the following activities occurred at your school **during the 2012-2013 school year**.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always, as needed
a) You arranged for intensive supports and interventions for students by making appropriate referrals as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Rules for student behavior were consistently reinforced by administrators.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Rules for student behavior were consistently reinforced by other teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Frequently disruptive students received behavior coaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) Needs assessments were conducted to quickly identify your students' needs and address them effectively.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) Academic and non-academic services for students at-risk of dropping out of school were coordinated to meet students' needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g) Academic and non-academic services for students at-risk of dropping out of school were monitored to ensure students' needs were met.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. Consider the main partner organizations that your school works with for reform or transformation. How often did each of the following activities occur **during the 2012-2013 school year**?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Your school did not work with partner organizations in 2012-2013
a) You consulted with your school's reform partners when brainstorming for a solution when challenges arose in your classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) You met with your school's reform partners to discuss students who need additional supports and/or to coordinate these supports and interventions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. **During the 2012-2013 school year,** did your school have a plan for parent and community engagement that was linked to specific goals for improving student learning and healthy development?
   a) Yes
   b) No
   c) Not Sure

23. **For the 2012-2013 school year**, how would you rate your school on each of the following?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Not offered at the school this year
a) Having effective communications from school-to-home and from home-to-school about school programs and student progress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Providing a wide range of volunteer opportunities for parents and community members to support the school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) Involving families with their children on homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions, such as academic goals or plans for work or college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) Coordinating resources and services both from the community and to the community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24. Please share any additional comments about supports, initiatives, and resources at your
    school:

    _____

Thank you for your time!

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Introduce leaders of the focus group and roles of each in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker).

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *As you may be aware, [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] has been selected to participate in a case study designed to identify best practices and provide feedback about the implementation of Diplomas Now. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, challenges, and drawbacks associated with implementing the Diplomas Now model.*

➢ Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ Ask permission to tape record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the tape and the transcript will not contain your name. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Have them review and sign the consent form.

➢ Note to interviewer: italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Interview Questions

1) Please describe your role in [INSERT DISTRICT NAME].
   a. *What is your level of involvement in the support of school reform implementation in [insert District name]?*
   a. *Has your role/involvement changed over time? If so, how?*
   b. *How did you first learn about Diplomas Now?*

First, I would like to talk with you about the implementation of Diplomas Now at the following schools: [LIST TREATMENT SCHOOLS].

2) What does Diplomas Now look like in [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] schools?
   a. *What services/supports are provided to students?*
   b. *Are interventions being implemented as planned?*
   c. *How does implementation differ across schools?*

3) How would you describe the status of Diplomas Now implementation?
   a. *What factors have facilitated the implementation of Diplomas Now activities?*
   b. *What factors have hindered the implementation of Diplomas Now activities?*
   c. *Which components appear to be the most challenging for schools to implement?*

4) What supports or resources does the district provide to Diplomas Now schools?
   a. *How were those supports identified?*
   b. *What else do schools implementing Diplomas Now need to be successful?*

5) What, if any, are some of the effects of Diplomas Now?
   a. *Have you noticed changes in the school climate, administrator/teacher behaviors, or other benefits?*
   b. *Has the district's relationship with the school changed since implementing Diplomas Now?*
   c. *What, if any, are drawbacks to implementing the program?*

6) What recommendations do you have for other districts implementing Diplomas Now? *What are key elements to sustaining and scaling up the Diplomas Now model? (e.g., financial, staffing, leadership, institutional knowledge, common vision)*

Next I would like to talk with you about the implementation of school turnaround efforts at the following control schools: [LIST CONTROL SCHOOLS].

7) What interventions/turnaround models are control schools using?
   a. *What factors have facilitated the implementation of turnaround models at control schools?*
   b. *What factors have hindered the implementation of turnaround models at control schools?*
   c. *Which turnaround model components appear to be the most challenging to implement?*

8) What supports or resources does the district provide to control schools?

9) What are some of the effects of school turnaround efforts that you are seeing in the control schools? *Have you noticed changes in the school climate, administrator/teacher behaviors, or other benefits?*

10) Is there anything else that you would like to share?

This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *As you are aware, your school has been selected to participate in a case study designed to identify best practices and provide feedback about the implementation of Diplomas Now. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, challenges, and drawbacks associated with implementing Diplomas Now.*

➢ Convey to each interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) no identifiable information will be collected; (4) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (5) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ Ask permission to tape record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the tape and the transcript will not contain your name. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Review and ask participants to sign the consent form.

➢ Note to interviewer: italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introductions and Background Information

First, I would like to begin by gathering some background information on you.

1) What is your current position and how long have you been in this role?

2) How did you first learn about Diplomas Now? *What, if any, other turnaround programs have been implemented at your school?*

Next, I would like to learn more about your school.
[Note to interviewer: limit the discussion for the next two questions to only a few minutes].

3) In a few sentences, what would you say are your school's greatest strengths? What are some areas for growth and improvement?

4) In a few sentences, please describe any programs/features that make your school unique.
[Note to interviewer: reference list of programs and ask if there are others in place].

Diplomas Now Program Implementation

5) Please describe what Diplomas Now looks like at your school.
   a. *What activities/components are in place?*
   b. *Who are the partners? How do partners interact?*
   c. *How do Diplomas Now staff interact with school staff?*
   d. *What is the role of school staff within the Diplomas Now model?*
   e. *How have partners' level of involvement changed over time?*

6) Which aspects of Diplomas Now appear to be fundamental or essential?

7) In general, what factors have facilitated the implementation of Diplomas Now? *What practices/staff members/supports were integral to program components getting put into place?*

8) In general, what factors have hindered the implementation of Diplomas Now? *Which components were the most challenging to implement?*

9) What supports or resources does your school need in order for Diplomas Now to be successful? *Does your school have adequate supports or resources in place? If not, what else is needed?*

Diplomas Now - Perceived Impact

10) What do you think are the greatest successes of Diplomas Now? *Have there been changes to school climate? What have been the benefits to Administrators? Teachers? Students?*

11) Have there been any drawbacks to implementing the program? *Have other programs or supports been constrained?*

Lessons Learned / Sustainability

12) Have you learned anything from your involvement with Diplomas Now that may benefit another school just beginning this work? If so, what lessons or recommendations would you share? *Would you have done anything differently?*

13) What are the most important factors for ensuring that Diplomas Now is sustained? (e.g., financial, staffing, institutional knowledge, common vision?)
14) Do you have any additional comments about the Diplomas Now program?

This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

Facilitator Guidelines:

➢ Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group and roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker).

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview: *As you are aware, Diplomas Now is an innovative school turnaround model designed to work in partnership with the nation's most challenged middle and high schools to help students stay on track, graduate, and succeed in post-secondary education. Your school has been selected to participate in a case study designed to identify best practices and provide feedback about the implementation of Diplomas Now. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will be used to help schools around the country learn from your experiences and achieve greater success implementing the Diplomas Now model.*

   ➢ Convey to each interview/focus group participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview/focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the interview/focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) interview/focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

   ➢ Ask permission to tape record the interview/focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the tape and the transcript will not contain your name(s). If you choose not to have the interview/focus group recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name(s) in reporting.*

   ➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Review and ask participants to complete the consent form.

   ➢ Note to facilitator: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introductions and Background

First, I would like to begin by gathering some background information on you.

1) Please tell me your first name, how long you have been working at this school, and how long you have been a teacher.

2) What grade(s)/subjects do you primarily teach? <u>If responses include 6th or 9th grade:</u> *Do you currently teach transition courses such as [insert either Navigating Middle School or Freshman seminar class]?*

Next, I would like to learn more about your school.

3) In a few sentences, please describe any programs/features that make your school unique. *What would you say are your school's greatest strengths? What are some areas for growth and improvement?*
    (<u>Note to facilitator:</u> Refer to programs listed on the "background information" document)

4) Are you familiar with Diplomas Now? If so, how did you first learn about the program?
    (<u>Note to facilitator:</u> Clarify how teachers refer to the program if they don't specifically mention it in the first few questions.)

Diplomas Now Program Implementation

5) Please describe what Diplomas Now looks like at your school. What activities/components/partners are in place?
    <u>Based on responses:</u>
    a. *Please describe your participation in Early Warning Indicator (EWI) meetings and in common planning time (with interdisciplinary teams and/or same-subject professional learning communities).*
    b. *Please describe interaction you have had with instructional coaches.*
    c. *What role, if any, have you had in conducting functional assessments of behavior and developing behavior intervention plans?*
    d. <u>*For middle schools teachers:*</u> *Please describe your experiences with climate and character reform curriculum; ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies Reform Curriculum; and Mastering the Middle Grades Curriculum.*
    e. <u>*For high school teachers:*</u> *Please describe your experiences with the Freshman seminar.*

6) Please describe your experiences with City Year volunteers and the CIS Coordinator.
    What has been your experience in referring students to receive additional supports from City Year volunteers and/or CIS Coordinator?

Diplomas Now - Perceived Impact

7) What changes, if any, have you noticed in the school since the Diplomas Now program was implemented?
    a. *Is the school climate different (e.g., changes in rules, policies, or student behavior)?*
    b. *In general, have you noticed any changes in the student body? If so, what changes?*

8) Please describe any drawbacks to implementing Diplomas Now. *Were any existing programs, supports, or services constrained or discontinued?*

Lessons Learned / Sustainability

9) What supports or resources do students at your school need in order to be success-ful? *Does your school have these supports or resources in place? If not, what else is needed?*

10) Have you learned anything from your involvement with Diplomas Now that may benefit an-other school just beginning this work? *If so, what lessons or recommendations would you share? Would you have done anything differently?*

11) Do you have any additional comments?

That concludes our focus group/interview. Thanks so much for your ideas and your time.

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *As you are aware, your school has been selected to participate in a case study designed to identify best practices and provide feedback about the implementation of Diplomas Now. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will allow you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, challenges, and drawbacks associated with implementing the Diplomas Now model.*

➢ Convey to each interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the site visit team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ Ask permission to tape record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will access to the tape.* W*ould you be opposed to us tape recording?* If yes: *we will still be taking down written notes but not identifying individuals making specific comments.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Review and ask participant to complete the consent form

First, I would like to begin by gathering some background Information on you.
1) Please tell me about your role at the school. *(Probe: How long have you been working at this school? What grade(s) do you primarily serve?)*

Next, I would like learn more about your school.
2) What would you say are your school's greatest strengths? What are some areas for growth and improvement? *(Probe: Please describe any programs/features that make your school unique.)*

3) Please describe your involvement with Diplomas Now. *(Probe: Are you familiar with the Diplomas Now model? How long have you been involved with the program? Has your level of involvement changed over time? If so, how?)*

Diplomas Now Program Implementation
4) Please describe what Diplomas Now looks like at your school. *(Probe: What activities/components/partners support your work as a counselor? Please say more about family/community involvement, counseling services, and/or behavior support services that are part of Diplomas Now. How do you interact with the CIS Coordinator and other partners?)*

5) Which aspects of Diplomas Now appear to be fundamental or essential to support student success? *(Probe: What supports or resources does your school need in order for Diplomas Now to be successful? Does your school have adequate supports or resources in place? If not, what else is needed?)*

Diplomas Now - Perceived Impact

6) Have you noticed changes in the school since the program has been implemented [specific program reference based on response to Q4]? *[Probe: Have there been improvements in rules, policies, or behaviors at your school (school climate)? How have student supports changed? In what ways have you noticed academic or other student gains (motivation, attitudes, behavior, social/emotional, etc.)?]*

7) Please describe any unintended consequences or drawbacks to implementing the program. *(Probe: Were there programs or supports in place that were discontinued when Diplomas Now began?)*

Lessons Learned / Sustainability

8) What are the main lessons you have learned from your involvement with Diplomas Now that may benefit other school counselors, leaders, or program staff in schools just beginning similar work? *(Probe: What recommendations do you have? Would you have done anything differently?)*

9) Do you have any additional comments about this school or the Diplomas Now program?

That concludes our interview. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group and roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker).

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview/focus group: *As you are aware, this school has been selected to participate in a case study designed to identify best practices and provide feedback about the implementation of Diplomas Now. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, challenges, and drawbacks associated with implementing the Diplomas Now program.*

   ➢ Convey to each interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview/focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the interview/focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) interview/focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5)* for focus groups only*: please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➢ Ask permission to tape record the interview/focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the tape and the transcript will not contain your name(s). If you choose not to have the interview/focus group recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name(s) in reporting.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Review and ask participants to sign the consent form.

➢ Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Probing questions should be tailored to the type of program staff being interviewed and the activities they are involved with (e.g., Transformation Facilitator, CIS coordinator, CY team leads, CY program managers, etc.).

Introductions and Background Information
First, I would like to begin by gathering some background information on you.

1) Please tell me a little bit about yourself:
   a. *What is your educational background?*
   b. *How long have you been working in school settings?*
   c. *What has been your experience with school reforms, including turnaround programs?*

2) Please describe your involvement with Diplomas Now.
   a. *What is your current role and what activities are you involved with?*
   b. *How long have you been involved with the [insert program name]? How long have you been involved with Diplomas Now?*
   c. *How has your level of involvement changed over time?*

Diplomas Now – Collaborative Activities

3) Who do you collaborate with on a regular basis? *What do you work on together?*

4) <u>For the Transformation Facilitator:</u> Please tell me about your role in facilitating leadership teams analysis of data/early warning indicator meetings. *How are meetings scheduled/organized? Who is involved and what are their roles?*

   <u>For CIS Coordinator:</u> Please tell me about your role in conducting needs assessments and engaging in data analysis/ early warning indicator meetings. *How frequently do you engage in case management activities (Tier III supports) with at-risk students? How are students identified and/or referred for Tier III supports?*

   <u>For City Year Team Lead:</u> Please tell me about your role in overseeing after school programs. *How many staff do you supervise? What activities are you responsible for overseeing?*

5) Please describe the collaboration among Diplomas Now partners.
   d. *Who are the partners (e.g., national, local/district, school teams)?*
   e. *How often do partners meet?*
   f. *How is information shared among partners?*
   g. *Have partners' level of interaction changed over time?*

Diplomas Now – Implementation Activities

6) What factors have facilitated the implementation of Diplomas Now activities? *What practices/staff members/supports were integral to program components getting put into place and being sustained?*

7) What factors have hindered the implementation of Diplomas Now activities?
   h. *Which components were the most challenging to implement?*
   i. *What supports or resources do you feel you need to be more successful?*

Diplomas Now - Perceived Impact

8) What, if any, do you think are some of the effects of Diplomas Now?
   j. *Have you noticed changes in the school climate, administrator/teacher behaviors, or other benefits/successes?*
   k. *What, if any, have been the drawbacks to implementing the program at this school?*

Lessons Learned / Sustainability

9) Have you learned anything from your involvement with Diplomas Now that may benefit another school just beginning this work? If so, what lessons or recommendations would you share? *Would you have done anything differently?*

10) What are the most important factors for ensuring that Diplomas Now is sustained? (e.g., financial, staffing, institutional knowledge, leadership, common vision?)

11) Do you have any additional comments about the Diplomas Now program?

That concludes our interview/focus group. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

Facilitator Guidelines[1]:

➢ Introduce leaders of the focus group and roles of each in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker).

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *As you are aware, Diplomas Now is an innovative school turnaround model designed to work in partnership with the nation's most challenged middle and high schools to help students stay on track, graduate, and succeed in post-secondary education. This school has been selected to participate in a case study designed to identify best practices and provide feedback about the implementation of Diplomas Now. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will be used to help schools around the country learn from your experiences and achieve greater success implementing the Diplomas Now model.*

➢ Convey to each focus group participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➢ Ask permission to tape record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the tape and the transcript will not contain your names. If you choose not to have the focus group recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your names in reporting.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Have them review and sign the consent form.

➢ Note to facilitator: italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Participant Background Information

Let's do brief introductions – tell me your name and how long you have been involved with City Year.

1) Please describe the role of City Year staff at this school.
   l. *What activities are you involved with? (e.g., classroom, before/after school, etc.)*
   m. *What does your typical workday look like at this school (i.e., what activities do you oversee and/or participate in)?*

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[1] This focus group should be comprised of City Year corps members. The City Year team lead and City Year program manager should be interviewed separately.

Diplomas Now Program Implementation

Now I would like to talk with you about Diplomas Now.

2) How did you first learn about Diplomas Now? *How did you come to be involved with the program?*

3) Please describe what Diplomas Now looks like at this school.
   n. *What is the role of City Year staff within Diplomas Now?*
   o. *Which Diplomas Now activities are you involved with (e.g., decision making meetings, etc.)?*

4) What factors have facilitated your work as City Year corps members?
   p. *What factors have facilitated the implementation of other Diplomas Now activities at this school?*
   q. *What practices/staff members/supports were integral to program components getting put into place?*

5) What factors have hindered your work as City Year corps members? *What factors have hindered the implementation of other Diplomas Now activities at this school?*

6) What supports or resources do you feel you need to be successful? *Do you feel you have adequate supports or resources? If not, what else do you need?*

Diplomas Now – Collaborative Activities

7) Please describe the level of collaboration among Diplomas Now partners.
   r. *Who are the partners? Who do you collaborate with on a regular basis?*
   s. *How often do partners meet? Have partners' level of interaction changed over time?*

Diplomas Now - Perceived Impact

8) What do you think are the greatest successes of Diplomas Now at this school?
   t. *Have there been changes to the school climate?*
   u. *What have been the benefits to administrators? teachers? students?*

9) Have there been any drawbacks to implementing the program? *Has Diplomas Now changed or constrained any City Year activities? And/or changed/constrained other school programs/activities/efforts?*

Lessons Learned / Sustainability

10) Have you learned anything from your involvement with Diplomas Now at this school that may benefit another school just beginning this work? If so, what lessons or recommendations would you share? *Would you have done anything differently?*

11) What are the most important factors for ensuring that Diplomas Now is sustained? (e.g., financial, staffing, leadership, institutional knowledge, common vision)

12) Do you have any additional comments about the Diplomas Now program?

This concludes our focus group discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

Facilitator Guidelines:

➢ Introduce leaders of the focus group and roles of each in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker). Inform participants of the anticipated duration of the focus group.

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *Your child's school is participating in a study to help us understand the best ways of providing middle and high school students with the kinds of opportunities and help they need to graduate from high school, to get ready for college or for a career. Today we want to hear your opinions about what supports and services are available to you and your child at this school, what you like and don't like about them, and your ideas about how they can be improved. Your contributions are extremely valuable and will be used to help schools around the country learn from your experiences and achieve greater success implementing programs that help students stay on track to graduation.*

  ➢ Convey to focus group participants our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the researchers who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

  ➢ Inform participants of the gift card: *In appreciation for your participation and taking the time to share your experiences and opinions, I would like to offer you a gift card; we will talk about that more at the end of the session.*

  ➢ Ask permission to tape record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the tape and the transcript will not contain your names. If you choose not to have the focus group recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your names in reporting.*

  ➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Have them review and sign the consent form.

  ➢ Note to facilitator: italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introductions and Background Information

1) Please tell me your first name and what grade(s) your children are in at this school.

2) In a few sentences, can you briefly describe what your child's school community is like?

Diplomas Now Program Implementation

3) What are the most important factors that determine whether or not students succeed in school (e.g., attendance, behavior, course performance)?

4) Are there programs available at this school to help your children achieve? If so, what are they?
   a. *Please tell me about any experiences you have had meeting with adult(s) at the school to decide ways to address your children's academic and non-academic needs.*
   b. *In what ways can you arrange for your child to get extra help with academic needs? With other personal issues?*
   c. *Have your children received supports/services from City Year staff, CIS Coordinator or other school staff?*
   d. *Have adults from the school called or visited your home when your child is absent or having trouble in school?*

5) Have your children ever engaged with mentors, role models, or volunteers at this school (e.g., City Year staff)? If so, in what ways?

6) What before/afterschool activities are available for students at the school? (e.g., health/career fairs, fundraising, sporting events)

Diplomas Now - Perceived Impact

7) Have you noticed any changes in your <u>child's performance, behavior, or interest in school over the past year</u>? If so, please describe what has changed and why you think these changes have taken place.

8) Have you noticed any changes in your <u>child's school over the past year</u>? If so, please describe what has changed and why you think these changes have taken place.

Lessons Learned / Sustainability

9) What other resources or activities would you like the school to provide to help students succeed?
   a. *How can the school provide you and other parents more opportunities to be involved?*
   b. *Are there other programs, perhaps those previously in place, which you wish you or your children could participate in?*

10) Do you have any additional comments about your school and/or programs at your school?

That concludes our focus group. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time. Please be sure to take your gift card and sign for the receipt of your gift card.

Facilitator Guidelines:

➢ Introduce leaders of the focus group and roles of each in supporting the meeting. Inform participants of the anticipated duration of the focus group.

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *Your school is participating in a study to help us understand the best ways of providing middle and high school students with the kinds of opportunities and help they need to graduate from high school, to get ready for college or for a career. Today we want to hear your opinions about what supports and services are available to you at your school, what you like and don't like about them, and your ideas about how they can be improved. Your contributions are extremely valuable and will be used to help schools around the country learn from your experiences and achieve greater success implementing programs that help students stay on track to graduation.*

   ➢ Convey to each focus group participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

   ➢ Ask permission to tape record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to tape record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the tape and the transcript will not contain your names. If you choose not to have the focus group recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your names in reporting.*

   ➢ Inform participants of the gift card: *In appreciation for your participation and taking the time to share your experiences and opinions, I would like to offer you a gift card, but we will talk about that more after the session.*

   ➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Review and ask participants to complete the assent form.

   ➢ Note to facilitator: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introductions and Background Information
First, I would like to begin by gathering some background information on you.

1) Please tell me your first name and your grade level.

Diplomas Now Program Implementation

2) How many of you have ever participated in small learning communities, teams, or academies? Please tell me more about that experience.
   a. *For 6th/9th graders: How many of you are currently in a transition course (e.g., Navigating Middle School/Freshman seminar)?*

3) What do you do when you need extra help with your schoolwork?
   a. *Are there adults at school that you can rely on when needed? If so, who (e.g., [insert names of City Year/CIS staff], teachers, administrators, mentors, role models, other students, or volunteers)?*
   b. *How do these adults help you? What do they do?*

4) What do you do when you need help with a personal issue at school?
   a. *Are there adults at school that you can rely on if needed? If so, who (e.g., [insert names of City Year/CIS staff], teachers, administrators, mentors, role models, other students, or volunteers)?*
   b. *How do these adults help you? What do they do?*

5) How do adults at your school show you that they care about you and your success?
   a. *Can you think of a time when an adult at your school helped you with a challenge that you were facing? If so, please describe.*

6) What before/afterschool activities are available for students at your school? (e.g., health/career fairs, fundraising, sporting events)
   a. *Have you or your parents ever participated in these events? If so, please describe your participation.*

Diplomas Now - Perceived Impact

7) Have you noticed any changes in your school over the past year? If so, please describe what has changed and why you think these changes have taken place.
   a. *For those at this school last year, have your views changed since last year?*

8) What effect, if any, do the programs/staff/activities we talked about today have on students (e.g., before/after school programs, learning academies, City Year staff, CIS Coordinator)?
   a. *How are students different?*
   b. *What are they doing better or worse (i.e., have you seen changes in students' attendance, behavior, participation in class, interactions with peers or adults)?*
   (NOTE TO FACILITATOR: reference the DN programs, staff, activities previously mentioned during the focus group. For each item, ask about perceived effects.)

Lessons Learned / Sustainability

9) What improvements would you like to see in the programs available at your school to help students succeed?
    a. *What are other strategies, resources, or activities would like your school to provide?*
    b. *Are there other programs that were previously in place that you wish you could participate in?*

10) Do you have any additional comments about your school and/or programs at your school?

That concludes our focus group. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time. Please be sure to stick around to receive your gift card and sign for the receipt of your gift card.

Diplomas Now i3 Validation Study
Case Study Protocol: Observation Protocol

NOTE TO OBSERVER - Explain the purpose of the observation and why you are there: *The purpose of the observation is to collect information as part of a case study being conducted at schools implementing the Diplomas Now program. The information from the case study will be used by educators around the country to help students stay on track, graduate, and succeed in post-secondary education.* <u>*We will only be taking notes on the facilitator/instructor and not on any student activity.*</u>

Today's Date (month/day/year):

Observer:

School/District:

Start/End time:

DESCRIPTION OF SETTING/PARTICIPANTS (e.g. room size, room setup, number of students, number of adults and their roles, etc.):
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY BEING OBSERVED (e.g., meeting or class, purpose/goal if known, etc.):
OBSERVATION LOG (Please record instructor/facilitator activities at 5 minute intervals):

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATION (In 1-2 paragraphs below, please provide a brief summary of your observation. Focus on the role of the instructor/facilitator and strengths of the activity):

About MDRC

MDRC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social and education policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve the well-being of low-income people. Through its research and the active communication of its findings, MDRC seeks to enhance the effectiveness of social and education policies and programs.

Founded in 1974 and located in New York City and Oakland, California, MDRC is best known for mounting rigorous, large-scale, real-world tests of new and existing policies and programs. Its projects are a mix of demonstrations (field tests of promising new program approaches) and evaluations of ongoing government and community initiatives. MDRC's staff bring an unusual combination of research and organizational experience to their work, providing expertise on the latest in qualitative and quantitative methods and on program design, development, implementation, and management. MDRC seeks to learn not just whether a program is effective but also how and why the program's effects occur. In addition, it tries to place each project's findings in the broader context of related research — in order to build knowledge about what works across the social and education policy fields. MDRC's findings, lessons, and best practices are proactively shared with a broad audience in the policy and practitioner community as well as with the general public and the media.

Over the years, MDRC has brought its unique approach to an ever-growing range of policy areas and target populations. Once known primarily for evaluations of state welfare-to-work programs, today MDRC is also studying public school reforms, employment programs for ex-offenders and people with disabilities, and programs to help low-income students succeed in college. MDRC's projects are organized into five areas:

- Promoting Family Well-Being and Children's Development
- Improving Public Education
- Raising Academic Achievement and Persistence in College
- Supporting Low-Wage Workers and Communities
- Overcoming Barriers to Employment

Working in almost every state, all of the nation's largest cities, and Canada and the United Kingdom, MDRC conducts its projects in partnership with national, state, and local governments, public school systems, community organizations, and numerous private philanthropies.