

Elevating Graduation Rates

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In September of 2008, the Institute of Educational Sciences released the IES Practice Guide on Dropout Prevention in which they proposed six research-based recommendations for keeping kids in school. ODYSSEYWARE addresses each of these recommendations and has been an integral part of successful, targeted programs to boost graduation rates and help students experience academic achievement throughout the country.

- 1 Utilize data systems that support a realistic diagnosis of the number of students who drop out and that help identify individual students at high risk of dropping out.**

ODYSSEYWARE helps to identify learning gaps and students in need of remediation with placement testing and ongoing assessments. Through the use of these tools in conjunction with our automatic grading and data reporting tools, educators can identify at-risk students, create individual learning plans for their success, and monitor their progress, keeping a diploma within their reach.

- 2 Assign adult advocates to students at risk of dropping out.**

Teachers who use ODYSSEYWARE's online curriculum in their classrooms have more time to devote to individual students and are often one positive influence that can make a notable difference in their learning outcomes. By believing in all students and offering them a roadmap to their success, these teachers contribute to raising self-esteem and support academic achievement.

- 3 Provide academic support and enrichment to improve academic performance.**

ODYSSEYWARE students learn at their own pace, under the guidance of a teacher or facilitator. For those students in need of additional instruction in certain subject areas, the curriculum provides a mastery-based plan that allows them to move forward only after meeting recommended benchmarks. Because ODYSSEYWARE is available online anytime, students have flexibility to spend the time they need to meet their personal academic goals.



Many schools across the country have implemented ODYSSEYWARE as their sole provider of summer school curriculum. With the flexibility it provides, more students are able to recover credits or earn credits toward early graduation and enrichment.

4 Implement programs to improve students' classroom behavior and social skills.

When students are successful in school, they are less likely to challenge teachers in the classroom, disrupting the learning process for others. Unlike in a traditional classroom, all ODYSSEYWARE coursework is self-directed and individualized for each student by facilitators who help establish attainable academic and behavioral goals with specific benchmarks. Because the pace and mastery levels are preset with students in mind, they are able to retake quizzes and tests until mastery is achieved. The students are able to experience a sense of accomplishment and are then able to move to the next unit of instruction. In addition, because students work as individuals, they compete only with themselves, alleviating the feelings of inadequacy that often results when students are slower to complete assignments.

With ODYSSEYWARE, student learning gaps are easy to identify. Prescriptive intervention allows teachers to incorporate strategies to strengthen problem solving and decision making skills for at-risk students.

5 Personalize the learning environment and instructional process.

One of ODYSSEYWARE's strongest features is its flexibility. The online curriculum can be customized to align with individualized learning plans and set at a pace that is most beneficial to students.

Because it is available online anytime, "classroom" time is extended to allow more time to complete coursework. This also allows scheduling of other responsibilities including work, extracurricular activities, and family responsibilities.

Students using ODYSSEYWARE as their primary curriculum are encouraged to use the Internet and outside sources. This fosters an ideal environment to build learning communities and social relationships with other students on the same learning track.

6 Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning and provide the skills needed to graduate and serve them after they leave school.

ODYSSEYWARE delivers rigorous academic coursework and is aligned to state standards. Based on proven teaching and learning strategies, this online curriculum gives students appropriate tools specific to their unique situations that lead to individual success and ultimately, graduation.