

Spotlight Strategy: Make Program Instructional Decisions Based on Data
Middle Bucks Institute of Technology

In 2001, as part of a pilot group started by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Career and Technical Education, Middle Bucks Institute of Technology, a career and technology center (CTC), achieved ISO (International Organization for Standardization) registration. This accomplishment gave the CTC a new tool for accountability and a renewed focus on data driven decision making. Goals and objectives for the CTC are developed based on the data collected throughout the school year. The administrative team meets twice a year in July and January to review data, set goals and make decisions based on the documentation collected.

The data comes from multiple sources including:

- PSSA scores
- NOCTI scores
- Enrollment report
- Withdraw report
- Discipline report
- Student attendance report
- Student industry certifications earned report
- Work-based education report
- Placement data report
- OAC participation report
- Staff attendance
- Student climate survey
- Staff climate survey
- Adult education survey

Since the school began using data to guide decision making, administrators have seen an increase on PSSA and NOCTI scores. At the beginning of their junior or senior year, students take PSSA and NOCTI pretests to determine and target academic weaknesses. The school then uses appropriate study guides to support learning in these identified areas throughout the year. Post-tests are given in the spring. In 2008-2009 school year, 81 percent of students tested at proficient or better on the written NOCTI test. This also resulted in an 11 point score improvement average.

Upon enrolling at Middle Bucks, incoming sophomores are also tested using the 4Sight test. This test, which is taken in the fall, covers reading and math and is designed to help the school determine where students fall on the academic scale as well as in what subject areas students need remediation. The same group of students then takes a 4Sight post-test in April to assess progress. In the 2009-2010 school year, there was a 12 percent improvement in math scores and 23.7 percent improvement in reading scores.

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Middle Bucks Institute of Technology is located in Jamison, Pennsylvania. As a part-time career and technical center, it enrolls approximately 840 students in grades 10 through 12 and provides 21 career and technical education programs. (Ninth graders may apply with special permission.) Middle Bucks serves three school districts.