Linking Indicators to Action: Decision Rules

Example 1: Contingency Table – Two Indicators

Indicators	Cut Scores	Monitoring Dates	Responsible
GPA	1.5	1st Quarter, available October 24th	Assistant Principal
Attendance Rate	90%	1st Quarter, available October 10th	Central Office sends list to Assistant Principal

In **Example 1**, a simple 2x2 matrix based on cut-off scores/rates can be used to represent alternative courses of action using two indicators. In many cases, the course of action may also require:

(1) additional data available for that student, or

(2) a mechanism (e.g., Support Team) to identify the underlying challenges that are preventing the student from reaching his/her potential.

		Attendance	
		≥ 90%	< 90%
GPA	≥ 1.5	No Action Required	Parent Contact
	< 1.5	Tutoring	Support Team Meets to Discuss Individual Student Needs

Example 2: Multi-factored contingency table – More than 2 indicators

In a more complicated system, factors must be aggregated to create various combinations and plans; this may be challenging as different data elements enter the system at different times. Here is a system with four indicators, some involving three possible cut scores:

Indicators	Cut Scores	Monitoring Dates	Responsible
GPA	1.5 / 2.0	1st Quarter, available October 24th	Assistant Principal
Attendance Rate	80% / 90%	1st Quarter, available October 10th	Central Office sends list to Assistant Principal
Signed up for SAT	Yes / No	October 1st	School Counselor
Taken an AP course	Yes / No	Summer	School Counselor

Indicator 1: GPA	Below 1.5	**1.5-2.0**	**Above 2.0**

Indicator 2: Attendance Rate	Below 80%	80-90%	Above 90%

Indicator 3: Signed up for SAT	No	Yes

Indicator 4: Taken an AP course	No	Yes

In **Scenario 2a**, the student appears to be doing well academically but may not be thinking about postsecondary plans. School should work with the student to articulate their long-term postsecondary goals, understand the requirements needed to get there, and what type of additional education or training this might require.

Scenario 2a

Indicator	Status of Student	Action
GPA		Students with green GPA and attendance who have at least one yellow SAT/AP mark should be encouraged to meet with a counselor with the goal of postsecondary planning.
Attendance Rate		
Signed up for SAT		
Taken an AP course		

In **Scenario 2b**, the student appears on track to attend a postsecondary institution but is missing a significant amount of school.

Scenario 2b

Indicator	Status of Student	Action
GPA		Identify the pattern of student absences (e.g. (all-day vs. last period, excused vs. unexcused). If specific courses are consistently missed, teacher should meet individually with student. For general absences, school counselor should communicate directly with student and parent/guardian.
Attendance Rate		
Signed up for SAT		
Taken an AP course		

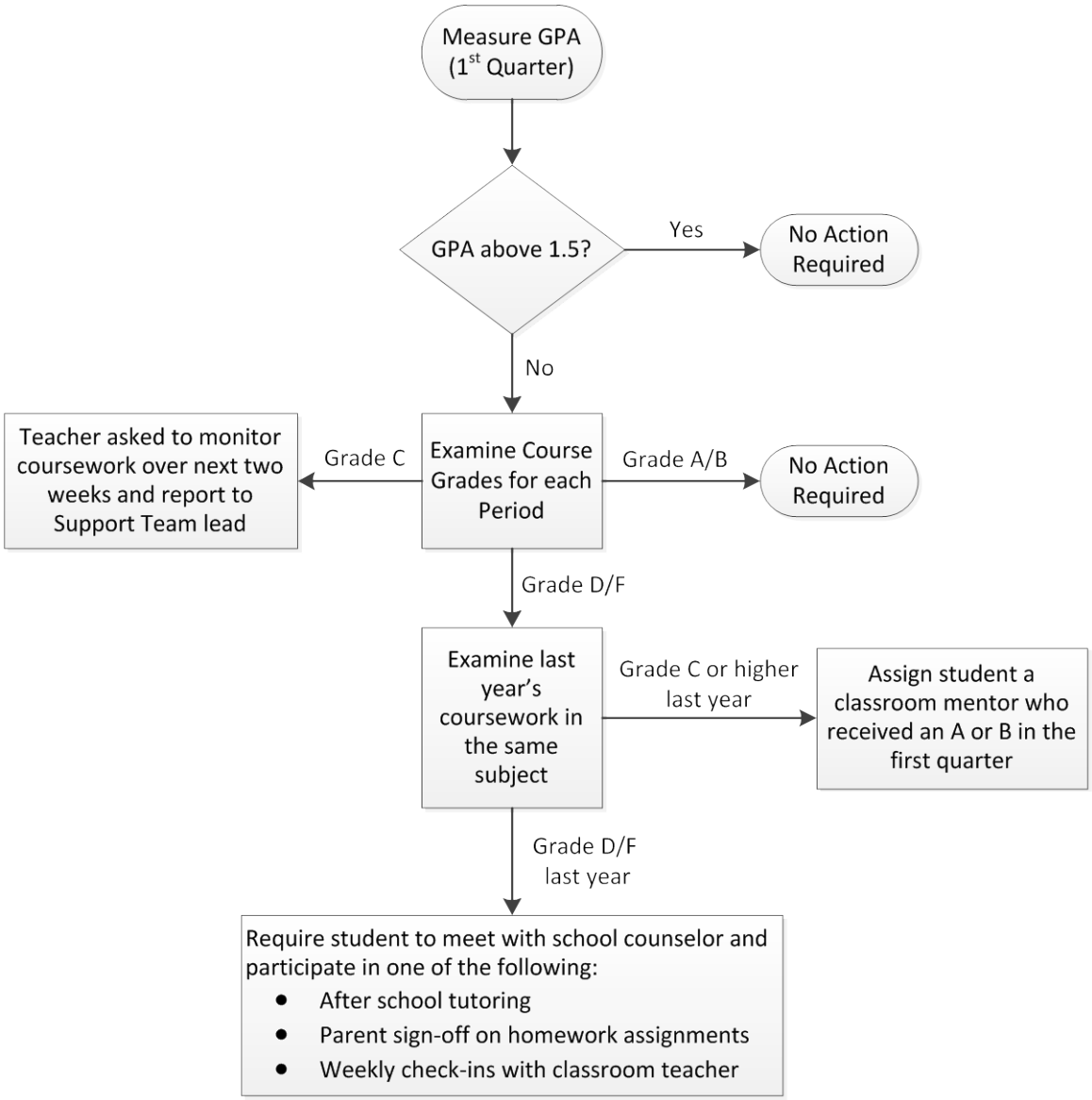
The student in **Scenario 2c** requires significant help to avoid dropping out.

Scenario 2c

Indicator	Status of Student	Action
GPA		Require immediate meeting with student and parent/guardian. Refer student to available agency (e.g., community dropout prevention program) for high-risk students.
Attendance Rate		
Signed up for SAT		
Taken an AP course		

Example 3: Flowchart for Decision Making

A flowchart can sometimes be useful to represent decision rules based on individual indicators, but it may not be the best tool when considering multiple indicators at once.



When developing charts that help map out indicator usage, some questions to ask are:

1. Are the indicators selected the "right" number for your district?
    - With too few indicators a district might miss some intended target students.
    - With too many indicators the system can be become burdensome. In some cases, analysis can be performed to minimize the number of required elements.
2. How were "cut scores" developed?

    - Are they linked to specific outcomes associated with high school graduation, college attendance, or college readiness?
    - Were they determined strategically? (e.g. by making a GPA cut score of 1.5 we identify the lowest performing 10% of students)
3. Have we resolved the following key issues across classrooms and/or school sites?
    - Consistent definitions for indicators? (e.g. Is every school using the same attendance rate? Does a suspension in one school mean the same thing as a suspension in another school?)
    - Processes that detail when and who collects indicator data?
4. Are schools or the district collecting information about which supports a student receives? Is there a plan to study which supports led to improved outcomes?