



Aberdeen School District

1100 W Commerce Street
Aberdeen, MS 39730
Andrea Pastchal-Smith, Ph.D.



TO: Aberdeen School District Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Andrea Pastchal-Smith 

DATE: July 18, 2024

RE: **Dropout Prevention Plan 2024-2025**

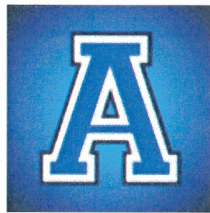
Please approve the Dropout Prevention Plan for the 2024-2025 School Year.

Thank you for your consideration.



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Dropout Prevention Plan
2024-2025



Superintendent
Dr. Andrea Pastchal-Smith

Aberdeen School District
1100 West Commerce Street
Aberdeen, MS 39730

Mississippi Early Warning System to Promote K-12 Academic Success



| District Leadership Team | | |
|------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Dr. Andrea Pastchal-Smith | Superintendent | Central Office |
| Latosha Williams | Chief Financial Officer | Central Office |
| Dr. Keila Glenn | Director of Federal Programs | Central Office |
| Candi Moore-Saul | Director of Curriculum and Instruction | Central Office |
| Dr. Antwaunette Jones-Taylor | Director of Student Support Services | Central Office |
| Willie Brandon, Jr. | Chief Operations Officer | Central Office |
| April Hazzle | Director of Instructional Technology | Central Office |
| Latosha Hubbard | Child Nutrition Director | Central Office |
| Tasha Smith | Director of Communication | Central Office |

| Schools | Grades | Principal |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Aberdeen Elementary School | K-4th | Dr. Natasha Cheeks |
| Belle-Shivers Middle School | 5 th – 8 th | Alexis Bush-Logan |
| Aberdeen High School | 9 th – 12 th | Tracy Fair |
| Schools | Grades | Assistant Principals |
| Aberdeen Elementary School | K-4 th | Andrei Brownlee |
| Belle-Shivers Middle School | 5 th – 8 th | Alex Williams |
| Aberdeen High School | 9 th – 12 th | Joseph Stone Marilyn Chandler |
| Alternative Learning Center | | Dr. Kristen Fondren |

| Schools | Grades | Counselors |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aberdeen Elementary School | K-4 th | Sheraton Crosby |
| Belle-Shivers Middle School | 5 th – 8 th | Sheraton Crosby |
| Aberdeen High School | 9 th – 12 th | Kasha Dowden |

The Aberdeen School District is committed to preparing students for success in a global community. The initiatives in this plan are designed to decrease the dropout rate and increase the graduation rate while preparing every student to be college and career ready.

Summary of Data

Multiple sources of data were considered to develop this plan, including, but not limited to:

- Graduation Rate
- Dropout Rate
- School Population
- Limited English Proficient
- Universal Screener/Common Assessment Data
- Homeless Population
- Migrant Population
- Students with Disabilities
- MAAP scores, pass/fail ratio
- Attendance
- Disciplinary Infraction Data

This plan includes initiatives and/or strategies for the following areas:

Dropout Prevention Task Force at each school

- Each school in the district will have a Dropout Prevention Task Force. The task force will consist of counselors, teachers and administrators and community partners. This group will focus on students scoring the lowest 25% level on the State of Mississippi Assessments and other subgroups needing additional assistance to meet graduation requirements.
- Utilizing data from multiple sources such as MSIS 2.0, teachers, and parents, the task force will determine why the students are scoring at this level. Data will include information on student absences, behavior and grade retention/course failure and/or under credits.
- Schools will also identify events/barriers in the students' lives outside of school that increase their risk of dropping out.
- Each school task force will develop a plan for counseling, mentoring and tracking at-risk students in order to improve student outcomes. These plans will include, but not be limited to, academic supports (tutoring, interventions, boot camps), behavioral, and/or social emotional supports (PBIS, Lifecore, support groups)

- Aberdeen School District has implemented Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to improve school safety, promote positive behavior, help students develop appropriate social skills in a variety of settings and decrease dropout rates. PBIS is focused on teaching positive behaviors instead of punishment.

Parental Involvement/Family Engagement

- The district will require each school to hold an annual parent meeting each Fall to update parents and guardians on the school's assessment data, accountability rating, and leading and lagging indicators.
- Each school will then hold a series of parent meetings throughout the year to cover topics such as, but not limited to:
 - o State assessments
 - o Graduation requirements
 - o At-risk factors that lead to truancy and dropping out
 - o Parent resources
 - o Reading strategies
 - o Programs, resources, and services provided at each school
 - o Meet-the-Teacher
 - o College and Career Readiness Standards
 - o 3rd Grade Reading Gate
 - o Universal Screener Results
 - o Common Assessments
 - o Test-taking strategies
 - o Scholarship/financial-aid opportunities
 - o Topics relevant to individual schools
- Schools can hold these activities/meetings multiple times throughout the day in order to grant parents more accessibility for attendance due to work schedules. Documents from these meetings/activities will include agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes and will be submitted to the district office for review.
- The district's student notification system, REMIND, will be utilized to inform parents and guardians of school events, absenteeism, etc.
- The district, to the extent allowable, will provide funding for parent involvement activities.

Focus on increasing reading levels at the elementary, middle and high school levels: *including reducing retention rates in grades Kindergarten, first and second*

- Academic Coaches have been placed on each elementary campus to help teachers apply learning theory and to model, observe and provide feedback to the classroom teachers. These academic coaches also facilitate professional development on each local campus to meet the needs of teachers at their school site. Academic coaches are trained in multisensory phonics instruction such as Orton-Gillingham and Phonics First.

- Instructional Assistants are employed in primary (K-2) and elementary (3rd-5th) classrooms and are trained in multisensory phonics. Instructional assistants work under the direction of the academic coaches to help students struggling with reading and math concepts.
- Each primary and elementary school implements Reaching Reading Success. RRS is a program designed to meet the needs of students who display characteristics of Dyslexia. RRS teachers spend several weeks each summer and once monthly throughout the school year in intensive training in order to be equipped to provide students who display Dyslexic characteristics specialized skills they need to be successful in general education reading classes.
- The Aberdeen School District partners with day care facilities in the surrounding area to assist the day care staff in providing age appropriate instructional strategies for preschool children. This partnership gives children who will be entering Kindergarten the skills needed to enter public school ready to learn.
- All K-3 and special education staff are trained in LETRS Phases I-III. LETRS connects current literacy research to explicit instruction giving teachers meaningful content and strategies to implement in classrooms. Newly hired teachers begin with Phase I training.
- All elementary teachers and instructional assistants are trained on Phonics First. Phonics First is a multisensory, phonics-based direct instruction approach to teaching beginning, at-risk, struggling, dyslexic, and EL readers.
- In grades Kindergarten through 12, the Aberdeen School District utilizes an MDE approved universal screener. These common assessments developed by ELS align with MS College and Career Ready Standards. Data from these assessments is used to determine which students require additional support, determine professional development needs and to guide the instruction of classroom teachers.
- The Aberdeen School District uses a Multi-Tiered System of Supports district wide to identify students in need of additional academic or behavioral support. Based on data from universal screeners/common assessments, classroom grades and other indicators, the Teacher Support Team on each campus identifies deficit areas, designs appropriate instructional or behavioral strategies and implements instruction based on individual needs. Under the MTSS umbrella Teacher Support Teams on each campus may include general education teachers, administrators, counselors, nurses, parents and/or other support personnel to ensure at-risk students are provided with appropriate academic and behavioral support.
- Literacy and Math consultants provide professional development centered on data and instruction. The consultants assist teachers with data dissemination, by modeling lessons and by coaching individual Reading/English and Math teachers on middle and high school campuses.
- MDE Literacy Coaches work with teachers on campuses that have been identified by MDE as high need areas. These coaches work with teachers to ensure best teaching practices are occurring in classrooms.
- Each high school in the district has a Career Coach. The Career Coaches assist students with finding present and future careers that align to each student's interests and talents.

Career Coaches serve as a liaison in the community between industries in the schools, connecting students with internships, job shadowing, and possible full-time careers. Career coaches meet with each high school student on a regular basis to develop relationships and understanding of the student's skills.

- Each school in the district organizes and maintains Professional Learning Communities around specific content areas, either by grade level or cross curricular. These PLCs afford teachers necessary opportunities to:
 - o Review and analyze data from various assessment sources
 - o Share best instructional practices and strategies
 - o Develop common lesson plans/units based on pacing guides
 - o Develop common classroom assessments from electronic item banks or other resources
 - o Collaborate to improve student achievement
- Each school in the district has a Technical Support Specialist to be a point of contact to assist teachers in all areas of technology including, but not limited to, Google Classroom, Remind, and other online platforms. All teachers use Google Classroom daily to post lessons, videos, and assignments. Every student, whether in person or virtual, has access to daily lessons and tutorials.
- The district has an Instructional Technology Lead Teacher who supports each school on the campus training the teachers in software, online textbooks, online remediation, and online acceleration activities.

Targeting subgroups that need additional assistance to meet graduation requirements.

- A Multi-Tiered System of Support is utilized throughout the district to assist student subgroups in need of additional assistance meeting graduation requirements. Multiple sources of data are collected to identify students who meet this criterion. Subgroups that fall into this category include:
 - o Students who have been retained
 - o Students who score level 1-3 on MAAP
 - o Students in the bottom 25% on state assessments
 - o Students who do not meet requirements for passing one or more state subject area assessments required for graduation
 - o Students who have an IEP
 - o Students identified as English Learners
- Students in these subgroups will receive additional support from teachers, counselors, and intervention specialists.
- Teachers and counselors will strive to identify and remove barriers preventing special populations from being successful.
- Aberdeen School District's Federal Programs Department allocates Title funding to schools based on needs assessments. Funding is used for professional development, programs and resources to support instructional goals for EL, Migrant, Homeless and other populations at Title I schools.
- Professional development is provided to ensure implementation of effective language

instruction for EL students.

- Ongoing training and support for special education teachers on how to write and monitor IEPs is provided.
- Each high school in the district employs a Career Coach. The Career Coaches guide students through activities relating to career paths for both college and non-college routes.
- Every school in the district has a Certified School Counselor. School Counselors provide students with personal, social, educational and career development. School counselors focus on identification, intervention and tracking of at-risk students.
- Edmentum is used for the credit recovery program to increase opportunities for students to recover or earn credits when they fall behind so they may graduate with peers. Edmentum is also an online platform used for remediation in classes and offers high school students the opportunity to earn first-time credit in Carnegie unit courses.
- High schools in the district have Boot Camps to remediate students who have not passed one or more state tests. Content area teachers focus instruction on the content of the state tests.
- The Aberdeen School District provides Career and Technical Education. These programs offer skills and education students need to succeed in today's diverse and competitive job market.

Develop dropout recovery initiatives that focus on students, age seventeen through twenty-one, who dropped out of school.

- The Aberdeen School District will partner with community programs to make referrals for students who have dropped out. Community partners may include:
 - o Itawamba Community College and Northeast Community College GED programs
 - o Community Development Foundation
 - o Skills to Work program
 - o Itawamba Community College Workforce Development Center

Address how students will transition to the home school district from the juvenile detention centers.

The Aberdeen School District will follow state policy for transitioning students from detention centers to their home school. Counselors, administrators, teachers, parents, court and/or probation personnel and service providers from outside agencies (mental health, substance abuse, child welfare) will coordinate efforts, utilizing multiple systems of support, to develop plans for successfully transitioning youth from correctional programs to home school settings.

DROPOUT PREVENTION PLAN

ABERDEEN HIGH SCHOOL

| School Level Early Warning System Team: Middle and High School | |
|--|---|
| Members | Roles |
| Building Administrator | Assures that the process is followed with integrity; Serves on district EWS team; Communicates clear expectations to school team members; Allocates resources; Ensures follow-up |
| *Counselor NOTE: The asterisk denotes that the counselor should serve as the team leader. | Serves as coordinator of the group; Provides information requested by the team for decision making; Keeps track of mapping between indicators and interventions at the school; Keeps a record of decisions made (NOTE: The MTSS Tier Student Profile can be used to document support decisions OR decisions can be denoted in a manner determined by the district/school) |
| Teacher | Provides academic and behavioral information about specific students on the list, as well as expertise in discussion of all students for identification and service purpose |
| Interventionist | Communicates the needs of special populations to the team (special education, migrant, homeless, English learners, gifted, etc.) |
| Lead Teacher or Instructional Coach | Collects information for determining needed modifications in the academic program offered to students; Provides assistance with data analysis; Determines professional development needs |

The EWS is a data driven team to increase completion and prevent student drop out, thus increasing graduation rate and better preparing our students for college and careers in the 21st century.

The data that is considered to be the “call to action” is:

1. Attendance
2. Behavior

3. Course Performance

The purpose of the EWS is to provide the necessary means to unify, focus, and target efforts to improve attendance, behavior, and course performance (the ABCs). It combines up-to-date student data on the ABCs with a multi-tiered response system to support students. This includes teachers and administrators who have access to the data; time committed to regular meetings for reviewing data and identifying students who are going off-track; the know-how to intervene with students, and the people to make it happen.

The following interventions will be implemented for all students who are indicated to be “sliding off track” and “off track” for graduation.

TIER I INTERVENTIONS:

| Intervention: | Description: | Attendance: | Behavior: | Course Performance: | Tier: |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| School-Home Note System/ Emails | Specific behaviors are targeted and specific rewards/consequences are outlined. | X | X | | Tier I |
| Talk to Parent/Call Home | Office calls for each absence. Teacher calls for behavior/academic issues. | X | X | X | Tier I |
| Differential Reinforcement (PBIS) | Desirable behaviors are increased while undesirable behaviors decrease, using reinforcers. | | X | | Tier I |
| Attendance Officers | Assure that all policies related to attendance are followed, including support services provided through School Attendance Officers. | X | | | Tier I |
| Student of the Month | Students are nominated for student of the month based on attendance, behavior, and course performance for each month. | X | X | X | Tier I |

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|--------------------------|--|--|--|---|--------|
| Student A/B Club | Students with all "A's" and "B's" are targeted and rewarded with positive reinforcers. | | | X | Tier I |
| Use of SWIS to Track All | All disciplinary data for all grades are being tracked. | | | X | Tier I |

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|-----------------------------|---|--|--|---|--------|
| Disciplinary Infractions | | | | | |
| Weekly Teacher Observations | Teachers are observed with feedback weekly to ensure coherent sequence of learning. | | | X | Tier I |

TIER II INTERVENTIONS:

| Intervention: | Description: | Attendance: | Behavior: | Course Performance: | Tier: |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Assign Case manager | Case manager checks with those assigned to monitor students. | X | X | X | Tier II |
| Check in/check out | Student checks in with assigned adult each day. Monitoring: Review goals. | X | X | X | Tier II |
| Positive Peer Reporting | Class-wide structured peer praise system for students seeking peer attention. | | X | | Tier II |
| Social Skills Training | Small group classes conducted by the counselor or behavior specialist. | | X | | Tier II |
| Common Assessments | Common assessments will be given to each state tested subject area every 4 ½ weeks. | | | X | Tier II |

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|-------------------|---|--|--|---|---------|
| Data Tracking | Common assessments and universal assessments for students in state tested classes will be tracked and posted. | | | X | Tier II |
| Pull-out Tutorial | Students who score in the lowest performing group will be pulled for tutorial twice weekly for 30 minutes. | | | X | Tier II |

TIER III INTERVENTIONS:

| Intervention: | Description: | Attendance: | Behavior: | Course Performance: | Tier: |
|--|--|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| MTSS Referral Tiered Support | Students in Tier III are automatically in the “off track” for graduation group | | X | X | Tier III |
| Staff Member Advocate | Assign staff member checks on the designated student on a daily basis. | X | X | X | Tier III |
| Career Counselor Services for Student and Family | Career Counselor will meet with students and parents to prepare for post-graduation expectations. | X | X | X | Tier III |
| Functional Behavior Assessment | FBA's conducted on all students who are at risk for alternative placement and all returning students from the Improvement Center (alternative school). | | X | | Tier III |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|--|----------|
| Behavior Intervention Plan | BIPs implemented for all students who are at risk for alternative placement and all returning students from the Improvement Center (alternative school). | | X | | Tier III |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|--|----------|