

DROPOUT PREVENTION POLICY

Leaving school before graduation or “dropping out” can be attributed to many complex factors. A dropout is a scholar who leaves school before graduation or completion of a program of study and does not transfer to another school. Such an individual is considered a dropout whether the “dropping out” occurs during or between regular school terms.

Section I: INDICATORS USED TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL DROPOUTS

Research indicates that progression towards dropping out begins well before high school. Scholars show warning signs as early as one to three years before dropping out. The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network found common variables considered to be indicators that identify potential dropouts. Those indicators will be used as a guideline to identify scholars who show warning signs of dropping out.

The dropout indicators are listed below:

- A. Poor attendance
- B. Low grade point average
- C. Low standardized test scores
- D. Number of grade retentions
- E. Number of discipline referrals
- F. Educational level of parent
- G. Special program placement
- H. Number of school moves (transfers)
- I. Low reading and math scores
- J. Language barriers
- K. Number of suspensions
- L. Interest in school
- M. Participation in extracurricular activities
- N. Pregnancy/teen parent
- O. Number of counseling referrals
- P. Family status (single parent family, family size)

Section II: PROCESS TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL DROPOUTS

Teachers, counselors, interventionists, attendance counselors, and administrators (this list is not exhaustive of other school personnel) at elementary and secondary schools will closely monitor the following data sources to identify and prescribe interventions for scholars at risk of dropping out:

- A. Daily attendance record
- B. Disciplinary referrals
- C. Grades (course grades at the end of each nine-week)

- D. STAR screener results in reading and math (fall, winter, and spring)
- E. Referrals to the counselor or behavioral specialist
- F. Performance level on state and district assessments (minimal or basic)
- G. Record of the number of transfers from one school to another or from one district to another
- H. Number of grade retentions and age in relevant to current grade placement

Section III: INTERVENTION

The primary objective for establishing dropout prevention procedures is twofold: 1) to identify and address the factors that keep scholars from graduating, and 2) to develop and implement comprehensive strategies to keep scholars on track for graduation by continuously tracking their progress. The Jackson Public School District Early Warning System, aligned with the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), will be utilized to achieve this twofold objective.

The Early Warning System and the Multi-Tiered System of Supports identify scholars approaching critical thresholds that place them at risk for dropping out of school. These systems use data to design and implement evidence-based interventions that require frequent progress monitoring, ongoing data collection, and data analyses. Additionally, the intervention systems promote collaboration and dialogue between families and school personnel as well as joint monitoring of scholar progress that focuses on specific, measurable outcomes.

Section IV: DISTRICT SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT

In addition to systematic intervention models, the Jackson Public School District offers an alternative program and a recovery credit recovery program for scholars that are considered to be high risks for dropping out.

- A. R.E.A.P. (Re-engaging in Education for All to Progress) provides academic opportunities to scholars, who are overage, nontraditional, or at risk of dropping out. R.E.A.P offers an alternative path to a high school diploma.

All scholars attending R.E.A.P. must be enrolled in the Jackson Public

School District. Scholars are referred to the program by the district's lead counselor after their transcripts have been assessed to determine that they are eligible for the program. The R.E.A.P. coordinator and counselor meet with parents and eligible scholars to discuss their academic path through the program.

Scholars who attend the program typically have not experienced success in a regular high school setting. The smaller classes (maximum of 15 scholars per class) allow teachers to provide individualized instruction. Four-by-four block scheduling allows scholars to complete more core courses in one year than allowed on the A/B block schedule. Flexible scheduling options allow more scholars to successfully complete their high school requirements and receive a high school diploma.

Once admitted, with regular attendance, active class participation, remediation and review, parental involvement, and good conduct, scholars will complete the program in two years or less and receive a high school diploma from their home school. R.E.A.P. scholars are eligible to participate in their home school's commencement exercises.

- B. Credit recovery is defined as a course-specific, skill-based learning opportunity for scholars who have previously been unsuccessful in mastering content / skills required to receive course credit or earn promotion.

Upon enrollment in a credit recovery course, a determination of the scholar's strengths and weaknesses in regard to the course content will be made. The scholar may complete assignments only in the course objectives that have not been mastered. Upon successful demonstration of mastery of these objectives, the scholar will receive credit for the course. Guidelines for Credit recovery are established in the Jackson Public School District Credit Recovery Policy JKA.

Section V: OPTIONAL PROGRAMS

- A. Peer Facilitators- helpers and tutors
- B. Police Liaison Officers
- C. Partners in Education
- D. Adopt-A-School programs

Section VI: REFERRAL

When a scholar drops out of school, the counselor, teacher, district dropout prevention coordinator and principal will arrange a conference with the dropout scholar and the parent if possible. It is important that the scholar and parent understand the possible consequences of his/her decision to leave school. The scholar and parent will be informed that it is a violation of the State Compulsory School Attendance Law (Miss. Code Ann. Section 37-13-91) if the scholar

dropping out is of compulsory school age. If applicable, the scholar will be given an overview of available services for securing a job, continuing his education, or both. Referrals will be provided to scholar in writing with telephone numbers and the names of contact persons who may be able to ease the transition.

Section VII: WHAT WILL BE DONE IF A SCHOLAR DROPS OUT

- A. The dropout scholar will be contacted by school personnel and counseling will be provided.
- B. The parents will be contacted and conferences held with parents and scholar.
- C. The dropout scholar will be advised to keep in touch with school officials.
- D. The scholar will be advised of available options based on variables such as age or other factors affecting eligibility or readiness; such options include enrolling in a GED program, getting a job, or enrolling in a vocational program to learn a trade.

Section VIII: FUTURE DROPOUT PREVENTION

The Jackson Public School District proposes to utilize existing policies and programs to the fullest extent possible to prevent scholars from dropping out. It is also the intent of the district to incorporate new strategies and to develop innovative techniques to encourage Jackson Public School District scholars to remain in school until graduation requirements are completed. Additionally, the District will follow all applicable provisions of the MS Code of 1972 and MS Public School Accountability Standards, 10 and 11.

SOURCE: Jackson Public School District, Jackson, Mississippi
DATE: July 21, 1986
AMENDED: April 18, 1988
August 4, 2016
November 28, 2017
May 3, 2022
REVIEWED: April 12, 2022