



Monticello Community School District

At Risk Plan & Dropout Prevention Plan

2012 - 2015

District Vision

Providing rigorous, authentic, personalized learning utilizing the local and global communities

Mission

The mission of the Monticello Community Schools, a district striving for educational excellence, is to prepare students through challenging experiences, to be caring, productive, creative citizens who will be life-long learners

Core Values

Effective Instruction

Technology & 21st Century Learning

Collaborative Relationships

Broad District Goals

- Increase student achievement in reading, math and science
- Produce students that will exhibit respect for self, others, living things and property
- Produce students that will exhibit competency in essential knowledge and skills matching his or her ability
- Produce students that exhibit civic, global and environmental responsibility
- Produce students that exhibit technological skills

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Introduction

The Educational Philosophy for the At-Risk Plan of the Monticello Community School District is for each student to exhibit competency in essential knowledge and skills matching his or her ability and to become a contributing member of society. This is met by providing a school program that encompasses the intellectual, physical, civic, social, technological and aesthetic education of children. The school program will emphasize objectives in the area of human relations, self-realization, civic responsibility and employability skills. In the school program, “children” is meant to mean all children. Each child has unique needs within the common needs of all children.

The At-Risk Plan for the Monticello Community School District encompasses the other District programs, which have been designed around the District’s educational vision and mission as well as the Iowa Department of Education’s suggestions with an approach, which reflects the following:

- Is child centered – meets the needs of each child across age groups with need and age appropriate strategies.
- Is flexible
- Is adaptable within varied learning styles
- Is school and community based – engages teachers, parents and students in both planning and implementation
- Strives for confidentiality of the student(s) served
- Encompasses a variety of criteria for the placement of a student needing assistance into an appropriate assistance program
- Avoids labeling children

Iowa Administrative Code

281—Iowa Administrative Code 12.2(256) Definition of At-Risk At-risk student means any identified student who needs additional support and who is not meeting or not expected to meet the established goals of the educational program (academic, personal/social, career/vocational). At-risk students include but are not limited to students in the following groups: homeless children and youth, dropouts, returning dropouts, and potential dropouts.

281—Iowa Administrative Code 12.5(13) Provisions for at-risk students Each school district shall include in its comprehensive school improvement plan the following provisions for meeting the needs of at-risk students:

1. Valid and systematic procedures and criteria to identify at-risk students throughout the school district's school-age population,
2. Determination of appropriate ongoing educational strategies for alternative options education programs as required in Iowa Code section 280.19A, and
3. Review and evaluation of the effectiveness of provisions for at-risk students.

Each school district using additional allowable growth for provisions for at-risk students shall incorporate educational program goals for at-risk students into its comprehensive school improvement plan. Provisions for at-risk students shall align with the student learning goals and content standards established by the school district or by school districts participating in a consortium. The comprehensive school improvement plan shall also include objectives, activities, cooperative arrangements with other service agencies and services groups, and strategies for parental involvement to meet the needs of at-risk children. The incorporation of these requirements into a school district's comprehensive school improvement plan shall serve as the annual application for additional allowable growth designated in Iowa Code section 257.38.

Iowa Department of Education Guidance Identification of students in each district is highly dependent on student(s) needs. Each school district will be different and the process dynamic. It is important that each district identify individual students at risk of school failure and use caution not to identify groups or clusters of students or even schools with a large concentration of high risk students. Early Warning Systems are crucial for future success and each system should have two components. One is the identification process and the second is using the data for selection and implementation of research-based intervention programs.

—At Risk.¶ Iowa Department of Education. Iowa Department of Education. 21 Feb. 2012.

<http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=418&catid=58&Itemid=1389>.

At-Risk, Drop Out Prevention Program Need

There is a small percentage of students that fall behind in school because their unique social, emotional, psychological, and academic needs are not being met. The goal of our At-risk and drop out prevention serves are to meet the unique needs of these students. Due to increasing need of students including low socio-economic status, homeless situations, mental- health issues, and families in crisis, regular school programming is unable to meet these students' needs so additional supports are put into place.

Monticello Community Schools are committed to providing an appropriate educational program for each student. We identify the need for support so that students at-risk may develop a positive self-concept and experience academic success, which will enable them to graduate from high school. The district will need financial support beyond what is currently available to provide the services needed to meet the unique learning needs of our at-risk student population. We will provide successful learning experiences for students who require additional funding for needed resources and support staff.

The traditional K-12 instructional program has not been effective in reaching some of our students. Through our At-Risk and Drop Out Prevention Program, we will provide:

1. Additional social emotional or academic assistance to our students in need during the school day.
2. Support to improve self-concept and academic success.
3. Summer school and/or after school programs to provide an opportunity to maintain skills and academic advancement.
4. Opportunities for credit recovery
5. Support for our families by connecting them to outside agencies that are available to our school.

Goals, Objectives, Activities & Instructional Supports

Program Goals:

1. To offer resources and programming that enable our at-risk students to be successful in the following three domains: academic, personal/social, career/vocational
2. To increase our students' resiliency, self-worth, and self-sufficiency
3. To establish an evaluation process to determine effectiveness of individual student progress as well as effectiveness of program progress

Program Objectives:

1. Decrease the rate of absenteeism, truancy and tardiness so students experience full access to core instruction

2. Increase student academic success by ensuring academic interventions. Therefore, increasing the likelihood of student achievement on district assessments.
3. Prevent potential dropouts from dropping out of school by having a system of intervention and support in place
4. Facilitate access to community based support services for at-risk students and families

Activities:

Formal and informal procedures, assessments and studies to predict or confirm student performance by grade level teams. Specific identification is made through:

- Referral by teacher, family, counselor, support staff, peer, self, outside agency
- Testing: group and individual, formal and informal
- Career assessment systems: career interests (Iowa PLAN, individual career planning, curriculum based assessments)
- Students assistance team models: Student Assistance Team, Grade level teams
- Centralized data analysis through Power School
- Mentoring programs (elementary only)
- Student response checklists
- For new students to the district a comprehensive cumulative file review will be completed to see if programming was provided in their previous district or if they qualify for programming at Monticello.

Monticello Community Schools use teachers, counselors, administrators and support staff to carry out planned support services for identified at-risk students. A referral sheet will be utilized during the identification process. Attendance, lack of connection to school, classwork, academic performance and environmental factors will be discussed. Any person/group can utilize the referral sheet to refer a student to At-Risk/dropout prevention programming. The complete referral sheet can be turned into either the Counselor office or the Principal's office.

The Counseling office will act as a centralized data center to analyze all the referral sheets. All referrals will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Timeline for referral process:

August-October	Review students currently receiving at-risk/dropout prevention services Refer students for at-risk/dropout prevention screening Identification and placement of students in appropriate at-risk/dropout prevention services
Ongoing	Cumulative file reviews of move-in students to determine needs for at-risk/dropout services
Ongoing	Continued screenings of students that are identified as in need of intervention in any of the following areas: personal/social, academic, or environment factors
March-April	Examine at-risk/dropout prevention program and individual student data

Special Instructional Support Services:

Supplemental and/or intensive support is given in addition to the core to students identified as at-risk. Below are activities and programs Monticello Community Schools use to help at-risk youth succeed:

Buildings	Academic	Personal/Social	Community/Agency/Career
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Shannon Elementary PK-1	Preschool Learning Centers Pull-out remedial programs ✓ Title I Reading for grades 1-3 ✓ Reading Recovery for grade 1 ✓ Instructional Intervention (individual and small group) ✓ Beginning in the summer of 2014, before and after school as well as summer reading programs for students that are in need of intervention in reading grades K-3. School Counseling Services	Transition Programs ✓ Open House ✓ Parent Information Nights ✓ Building Tours Mentoring ✓ Adult mentors (Lunch Buddies) paired with at-risk elementary students Attendance monitoring grades PK-12 Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Nursing Services School Counseling Services	Community service projects for applied learning such as Restore Our Community day (ROC) Jones County Safe and Healthy Youth Coalition School Counseling Services HACAP Operationl back pack program Horizons family services Monticello Ministerial Council
Carpenter Elementary Grades 2-4	Learning Centers Pull-out remedial programs ✓ Title I Reading for	Transition Programs ✓ Open House ✓ Parent Information Nights ✓ Building	Community service projects for applied learning such as Restore Our Community day (ROC) HACAP Operationl

	grades 1-3 ✓ Reading Recovery for grade 1 ✓ Instructional Intervention (individual and small group) ✓ Beginning in the summer of 2014, before and after school as well as summer reading programs for students that are in need of intervention in reading grades K-3.	Tours Mentoring ✓ Adult mentors (Lunch Buddies) paired with at-risk elementary students Attendance monitoring grades PK-12 Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Nursing Services	back pack program Horizons family services Jones County Safe and Healthy Youth Coalition Monticello Ministerial Council
Monticello Middle School Grades 5-8	Computer-based instruction and credit recovery ✓ Moodle and e2020 Pull-out remedial programs ✓ Instructional Intervention (individual and small group) ✓ Strategic Literature, for student scoring below the proficiency on Iowa Assessments (9-12), (8-12 starting in 2014-2015) School Counseling Services	Transition Programs ✓ Open House ✓ Parent Information Nights ✓ Building Tours Mentoring ✓ Some 12th grade students help K-8 students in academic situations Attendance monitoring grades PK-12 Positive Behavioral Interventions and	Community service projects for applied learning such as Restore Our Community day (ROC) Horizons family services Jones County Safe and Healthy Youth Coalition HACAP Operationl back pack program School Counseling Services School back pack

		Supports (PBIS) Nursing Services School Counseling Services	program Monticello Ministerial Council
High School Grades 9-12	Computer-based instruction and credit recovery ✓ Moodle and e2020 Pull-out remedial programs ✓ Instructional Intervention (individual and small group) ✓ Strategic Literature, for student scoring below the proficiency on Iowa Assessments (9-12), (8-12 starting in 2014-2015) ✓ Foundations of Literature for our most struggling readers ✓ General Mathematics- Additional math courses at the 9-12 level for students struggling in mathematics. Course is designed to increase math ability and	Transition Programs ✓ Open House ✓ Parent Information Nights ✓ Building Tours Attendance monitoring grades PK-12 Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Nursing Services School Counseling Services	Community service projects for applied learning such as Restore Our Community day (ROC) Silver Cord Volunteer Recognition for students grades 9-12 completed volunteer service throughout their high school career Jones County Safe and Healthy Youth Coalition Career Connections Job Shadow Opportunities Work Experience Opportunities Monticello Ministerial

	functional skills in mathematics Summer school and credit recovery-9-12 Saturday School – 9-12 Students High Interest Program (SHIP) – grades 9-12 offered to students that are in need of additional academic assistance throughout the school day Study Table – academic support for 9-12 student participating in extra-curricular activities Contractual learning and personalized education plans for students based on student need and instructor approval		Council School Counseling Services Horizons family services
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At Risk & Dropout Programming

These programs are for students identified in one of these two categories: “Returning

dropouts “are resident pupils who have been enrolled in a public or nonpublic school in any of the grades seven through twelve who withdrew from school for a reason other than transfer to another school or school district and who subsequently enrolled in a public school in the district. "Potential dropouts" are resident pupils who are enrolled in a public or nonpublic school who demonstrate poor school adjustment as indicated by two or more of the following:

- ❖ High rate of absenteeism, truancy, or frequent tardiness.
- ❖ Limited or no extracurricular participation or lack of identification with school, including but not limited to, expressed feelings of not belonging.
- ❖ Poor grades, including but not limited to, failing in one or more school subjects or grade levels.
- ❖ Low achievement scores in reading or mathematics, which reflects achievement at two years or more below grade level.
- ❖ Children in grades kindergarten through three who meet the definition of at-risk children adopted by the department of education.
- ❖ Additional criteria are added based on district and building needs

At Risk Eligibility & Potential Dropout Procedures and Criteria - Elementary

In the fall of each school year a committee of counselor, administrator and selected teachers will meet to look over student data and determine appropriate services for students identified for at-risk and in need of dropout prevention services. Students new to the district will also go through the screening process and needs for services will be determined. The committee will reconvene in the spring of each year to review student data and evaluate program effectiveness.

Monticello Community School District Elementary At-Risk Indicators

	Factors	Criteria
1	Attendance	87% or lower daily attendance (as per district policy); frequent tardies
2	Lack of Connection	any suspension; 5 or more major office referrals in a calendar year
3	Classroom performance	any student on a GEI plan; any student with a 504 plan; any student in Reading Recovery or Title I; any student receiving Tier III supports; any student who has been retained
4	Standardized Tests	2 grades below grade level on MAP; 2 grades below grade level on Iowa Assessments; below target on FAST
5	Environmental (local factors)	previous identification in an at-risk program; low SES (F/RL); transient (attending for less than one FAY); homeless; DHS involvement; disengaged parents (parents who do not attend conferences, return phone calls/emails); emotional issues; family crisis situations

To be considered At-Risk, students must have at least three indicators.

- Students may have two indicators from #5 as well as one from #1-4.
- Three indicators from #5 does not qualify. Students must have at least one indicator from #1-4

Data sources:

Powerschool attendance reports, F/R Lunch, Test data (Gates, MAP, FAST, Iowa Assessments), GEI Plan (including Reading Recovery, Title I, Tier III intervention)
GWAEA Behavior Management System reports

Monticello Elementary School At-Risk Program Exit Procedure

Students will have an annual review of their progress. When students no longer meet at-risk criteria they will be exited from the at-risk program. This review will consist of the following items:

- Assessment review, including Iowa Assessment scores, MAP scores, Iowa Tier assessments
- Assessment of current classroom performance
- Attendance review showing improvement - absent 10% or less of school days, or improved tardy rate
- Behavior review according to Grant Wood AEA Behavior Management System showing improvement in the number of major office referrals - two or less per trimester.
- *Parents/Guardians are always contacted with a letter and/or phone call in regards to students entering or exiting the at-risk program.

At Risk Eligibility & Potential Dropout Procedures and Criteria - Middle School

In the fall of each school year a committee of counselor, administrator and selected teachers will meet to look over student data and determine appropriate services for students identified for at-risk and in need of dropout prevention services. Students new to the district will also go through the screening process and needs for services will be determined. The committee will reconvene in the spring of each year to review student data and evaluate program effectiveness.

Monticello Community School District Middle School At-Risk Indicators

	Factors	Criteria
1	Attendance	87% or lower daily attendance; truancy or unexcused absences; frequent tardiness
2	Lack of Connection	any suspension; 5 or more major office referrals in a calendar year; limited or no extracurricular participation or lack of identification with school
3	Classroom performance	any student on a GEI plan or 504 plan; any student in Reading Intervention Group; any student receiving Tier III supports; any student who has been retained; poor grades more than one D or are failing in one or more school subjects
4	Standardized Tests	2 grades below grade level on MAP; 2 grades below grade level on Iowa Assessments;
5	Environmental (local factors)	previous identification in an at-risk program; low SES (F/RL); transient (attending for less than one FAY); homeless; DHS involvement; disengaged parents (parents who do not attend conferences, return phone calls/emails); emotional issues and lack of motivation; involved in Substance Abuse Counseling, family crisis situations

To be considered At-Risk, students must have at least three indicators.

- Students may have two indicators from #5 as well as one from #1-4.
- Three indicators from #5 does not qualify. Students must have at least one indicator from #1-4.

Data sources:

Powerschool attendance reports, F/R Lunch, Test data (MAP, Iowa Assessment) GEI Plan (including Reading Recovery, Title I, Tler III intervention), GWAEA Behavior Management System reports

Monticello Middle School At-Risk Program Exit Procedure

Students will have an annual review of their progress. When students no longer meet at-risk criteria they will be exited from at-risk program. This review will consist of the following items:

- Iowa Assessment Testing, MAP scores, and any relevant test scores including tests given by classroom teachers and GWAEA 10.
- Improvement in Academic Grade performance
- Child Study Team/Teacher recommendations
- Changes in their family situation
- Improved attendance rate - absent 10% or less of the school days
- Decrease in the number of major reports filed - two or less per trimester.

**Parents/Guardians are always contacted with a letter and/or phone call in regards to students entering or exiting the at-risk program.*

At Risk Eligibility & Potential Dropout Criteria and Procedures High School

In the fall of each school year a committee of counselor, administrator and selected teachers will meet to look over student data and determine appropriate services for students identified for at-risk and in need of dropout prevention services. Students new to the district will also go through the screening process and needs for services will be determined. The committee will reconvene in the spring of each year to review student data and evaluate program effectiveness.

Monticello Community School District High School At-Risk Indicators

	Factors	Criteria
1	Attendance	87% or lower daily attendance; truancy or unexcused absences; frequent tardiness, aren't in the scheduled class, frequent visits to the nurse's/school counselor's office
2	Lack of Connection	any suspension; 5 or more major office referrals in a calendar year; limited or no extracurricular participation or lack of identification with school, more than 2 bullying forms submitted by them or by others naming them, no visible friends, requests/completes application to JREP, attends JREP, JMRT student
3	Classroom performance	any student on a GEI plan or 504 plan; any student in Reading Intervention Group; any student receiving Tier III supports; any student who has been retained; poor grades more than one D or are failing in one or more school subjects, not earning all credits needed for graduation, below a 2.0 gpa at quarter or semester, certified letters to parents of seniors during 2nd semester of their senior years indicating their risk of not graduating
4	Standardized Tests	2 grades below grade level on MAP; 2 grades below grade level on Iowa Assessments;
5	Environmental (local factors)	previous identification in an at-risk program; low SES (F/RL); transient (attending for less than one FAY); homeless; DHS involvement; disengaged parents (parents who do not attend conferences, return phone calls/emails); emotional issues and lack of motivation; involved in Substance Abuse Counseling, family crisis situations, adolescent parenthood, difficulty transitioning from one building to the next, member of racial/ethnic/low income minority group, low expectations by adults, main friend group has dropped out/attended JREP, death/illness of important people, sibling conflicts, involvement with criminal justice system

To be considered At-Risk, students must have at least three indicators.

- Students may have two indicators from #5 as well as one from #1-4.

- Three indicators from #5 does not qualify. Students must have at least one indicator from #1-4.

Data sources:

Powerschool attendance reports, F/R Lunch, Test data (MAP, Iowa Assessment) GEI Plan (including Reading Recovery, Title I, Tler III intervention), GWAEA Behavior Management System reports

Monticello High School At-Risk Program Exit Procedure

Students will have an annual review of their progress. When students no longer meet at-risk criteria they will be exited from at-risk program. This review will consist of the following items:

- Iowa Tests of Education Development, MAP scores, and any relevant test scores including tests given by classroom teachers and GWAEA 10.
- Passing grades in all classes and earning credits towards graduation
- Student Assistant Team/Teacher recommendations
- Changes in their family situation
- Improved attendance rate - absent 10% or less of the school days
- Attendance records demonstrating presence in scheduled classes with fewer tardies.
- Decrease in number of visits to the nurses/school counselor's office
- No major office referrals filed
- Changes in personal/social condition

*Parents/Guardians are always contacted with a letter and/or phone call in regards to students entering or exiting the at-risk program.

Programming for Returning Dropouts

Students returning to Monticello High School after dropping out will be provided services based on their individualized needs. A meeting with the student and parents as appropriate will take place to determine what the student's academic, social emotional and career needs will be upon return to High School. Multiple services will be considered for each returning dropout. Some (but not all) are as follows:

- ❖ Reintegration through the Jones County Alternative High School
- ❖ Kirkwood Community College credit recovery
- ❖ E2020 online credit recovery
- ❖ Study Table
- ❖ SHIP programming
- ❖ Individual or small group counseling
- ❖ Connections to community service providers
- ❖ Academic intervention
- ❖ Attendance tracking

Ongoing Educational Strategies & Alternative Education Programs Associated with At-Risk & Dropout Prevention

Preschool Programming

The preschool program goal is to provide high quality preschool programming meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and those from diverse backgrounds. Monticello Community School District in cooperation with our community partners, strive to provide a learning rich environment the encourages children to learn and develop academic as well as appropriate social emotional and behavioral skills. The ultimate goal of the preschool is to prepare children to be reading to learn at high levels when entering Kindergarten.

Title I, Reading Recovery & Literacy Support Beyond Grade 4:

A strong literacy focus is the cornerstone of the academic program at all levels in the Monticello Community School District. Small group and individualized literacy instruction through Title I, Reading Recovery and Literacy Specialists/Instructional Strategies is provided to all children with specific academic needs in literacy.

Starting in the summer of 2014 students in grades K-3 that are academically discrepant from peers in reading will be provided the opportunity for summer reading programming as well as after school reading programming starting in the fall of the 2014-2015 school year.

Response to Intervention (RtI)

RtI is a focus for Literacy at the Elementary level and is being studied at the Middle School and High School levels. It focuses on regular screening to students that are not meeting academic benchmarks and then targeted intervention in the area of academic or behavioral needs. Students are provided intervention either on a supplemental or intensive level.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

PK-12 staff are trained in the use of PBIS that recognizes the need to provide explicit instruction to students in all facets of expected school behavior and reinforce those expectations with a universal acknowledgement system. PBIS also incorporates classroom expectations and also provides systematic support for students that are in need of intensive behavioral interventions and supports.

Large Group, Small Group & Individualized School Counseling Services

Monticello PK-12 Counseling staff provide a variety of support services to students and families that have been identified as at risk or as a potential dropout. The Monticello School Counseling program is based on the framework of the American School Counselor Association framework which is proactive and anticipates the personal/social, academic and career education needs of students at multiple stages of development. The program is both instructive and responsive by promoting lifelong learning and behavioral success.

Jones County Regional Alternative High School (JCAH) & e2020

JCAH is a program that is hosted by Kirkwood Community College and is shared with 3 additional regional high schools. Monticello currently has ten full-time seats for students that are in need of an alternative means to High School graduation. Monticello High School also offers online credit recovery through e2020 to ensure students remain on track for graduation. Students can also recover credits throughout the school year through Kirkwood Community College credit recovery programs.

John McDonald Residential Treatment (JMRT) Program:

JMRT is a residential treatment center for adjudicated youth (girls) grades 7-12. In this program students are provided their high school education in an off-campus setting until the point when they are able to successfully transition to Monticello High School and then return to their home school. This program provides students the opportunity to continue their education while access the necessary supports needed to be reintegrated back into society.

Student High Interested Program (SHIP):

Students that have a 504 plan or have struggling to obtain academic success are referred to the SHIP. This program is designed to provide students with tutorial assistance and attendance monitoring. Students are able to earn an elective credit towards graduation requirement for their satisfactory participation in SHIP.

Study Table & Guided Study:

Study Table & Guided Study is designed for students that are not meeting the necessary academic requirements throughout the school year.

Study Table at the High School level is provided Monday through Thursday in the High School Library from 2:55-3:25. A teacher is available during study table to assist with homework assistance.

Guided Study is offered at the Middle School level. It provides students in grades 7 and 8 the opportunity to work directly with teachers on a daily basis. Students that are struggling in coursework can schedule a time with the teacher during guided study to get small group or individualized academic attention.

Staff In-service/Professional Development

All staff PK-12 engage in professional development around the Authentic Intellectual Work framework with is supported by research to improve academic achievement for at-risk, low socio-economic status students and students entitled to special education services.

Staff that work directly with students that are at-risk have opportunities to attend specialized professional development and conferences focused on teaching and counseling students identified as at-risk or as potential drop-outs.

All staff will be provided professional development in Response to Intervention and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, which are designed to meet the needs of students that are struggling academically, and/or behaviorally in the school setting.

Staff will receive professional development when processes and/or procedures for identification and services for at-risk youth and potential drops outs are adjusted to more effectively serve our students.

At Risk & Dropout Prevention Program Staffing

Teacher Associates

Qualifications: Are trained by district personnel to work with At-Risk Youth

Provide:

- Academic support for students not scoring at proficient levels.
- Small group and/or individual academic tutoring for identified at-risk students.
- Report academic tutoring progress for at-risk students to student assistance teams.
- Support RTI interventions for at-risk students.
- Supervising after school computer lab to build school connections.

Counselors:

Qualifications: Hold a valid Iowa School Counselor Licensure issued by the Iowa Board of Education

Provide:

- Provide comprehensive counseling program for all students
- Coordinate at-risk mentor program
- Provide individual and small group time slots to counsel at-risk students
- Support attendance concerns through communication and counseling
- Coordinate communication and services when at-risk students are not progressing academically, socially, etc. in school
- Monitor RTI interventions for identified at-risk students.

- Review at-risk student interventions at student assistance team meetings.
- Assist in home visits for at-risk students with attendance concerns.
- Support students who are in alternative placements.

Student Services Coordinator (High School only):

Qualifications: Have specialized training in working with At-Risk youth

Provide:

- Oversees the Dropout Prevention Program and personnel
- Facilitates the Student Assistance Team Meetings
- Collects and compiles Program Evaluation Data
- Reports Program Evaluation Data to School Improvement Advisory

Instructional Strategist (Elementary Only) & Reading Specialist (5-12):

Qualifications: Hold a valid Iowa Teaching Licensure issued by the Iowa Board of Education. Have specialized endorsements in reading or mathematics.

Provide:

- Provide instruction/services to meet student needs
- Provide information to help identify and enroll students
- Monitor student progress
- Meet individual student needs
- Monitor/update the Personal Education Plan (PEPs) for individual students
- Attend building and district student assistance teams meetings when appropriate
- Participate in RtI problem solving meetings

Mentors:

Qualifications: Selected to mentor based on attributes that are a good match for individual students. Adult mentors must successfully pass a background check

Provide:

- Meet with students to foster connection with school
- Provide added support for student within the school context
- Aid student with social and academic concerns as needed

Building Administrators:

Qualifications: Hold a valid Iowa School Administrator Licensure issued by the Iowa Board of Education

Provide

- Monitor programs in buildings
- Collect data and complete district program evaluations
- Attend attendance meetings
- Routinely observe in classrooms
- Participate in RTI and problem solving meetings
- Monitor student behavior

School Nurse(s):

Qualifications: Hold a valid Iowa Nursing Licensure issued by the Iowa Department of Health

Provide:

- Complete health screenings and maintain records to meet the personal health needs of students
- Administer medication
- Make necessary referrals to guidance and other social service agencies

Program Budget Considerations

The Monticello Community School District follows the guidelines for At-Risk and Dropout Prevention program funding set forth by the Iowa Department of Education. Program budgets help support salaries for School Counselors and other support staff designated to work with At-Risk youth and those youth that are at risk for dropping out of school.

257.41 Funding for programs for returning dropouts and dropout prevention.

1. *Budget.* The budget of an approved program for returning dropouts and dropout prevention for a school district, after subtracting funds received from other sources for that purpose, shall be funded annually on a basis of one-fourth or more from the district cost of the school district and up to three-fourths by an increase in supplemental state aid as defined in section 257.8. Annually, the department of management shall establish a modified supplemental amount for each such school district equal to the difference between the approved budget for the program for returning dropouts and dropout prevention for that district and the sum of the amount funded from the district cost of the school district plus funds received from other sources.
2. *Appropriate uses of funding.* Appropriate uses of the returning dropout and dropout prevention program funding include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Salary and benefits for instructional staff, instructional support staff, and school-based youth services staff who are working with students who are participating in dropout

- b. prevention programs, alternative programs, and alternative schools, in a traditional or alternative setting, if the staff person's time is dedicated to working with returning dropouts or students who are deemed, at any time during the school year, to be at risk of dropping out, in order to provide services beyond those which are provided by the school district to students who are not identified as at risk of dropping out. However, if the staff person works part-time with students who are participating in returning dropout and dropout prevention
 - c. programs, alternative programs, and alternative schools and has another unrelated staff assignment, only the portion of the staff person's time that is related to the returning dropout and dropout prevention program, alternative program, or alternative school may be charged to the program. For purposes of this paragraph, if an alternative setting is necessary to provide for a program which is offered at a location off school grounds and
 - d. which is intended to serve student needs by improving relationships and connections to school, decreasing truancy and tardiness, providing opportunities for course credit recovery, or helping students identified as at risk of dropping out to accelerate through multiple grade levels of achievement within a shortened time frame, the tuition costs for a student identified as at risk of dropping out shall be considered an appropriate use of the returning dropout and dropout prevention program funding.
 - a. Professional development for all teachers and staff working with at-risk students and programs involving dropout prevention strategies.
 - b. Research-based resources, materials, software, supplies, and purchased services that meet all of the following criteria:
 - i. Meets the needs of kindergarten through grade twelve students identified as at risk of dropping out and of returning dropouts.
 - ii. Are beyond those provided by the regular school program.
 - iii. Are necessary to provide the services listed in the school district's dropout prevention plan.
 - iv. Will remain with the kindergarten through grade twelve returning dropout and dropout prevention program.
 - c. Up to five percent of the total budgeted amount received pursuant to subsection 1 may be used for purposes of providing district-wide or building-wide returning dropout and dropout prevention programming targeted to students who are not deemed at risk of dropping out.
3. *Limitation.* For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013, and each succeeding fiscal year, the ratio of the amount of the modified supplemental amount established by the department of management compared to the school district's total regular program district cost shall not exceed two and one-half percent. However, if the school district's highest such ratio so determined for any fiscal year beginning on or after July 1, 2009, but before July 1, 2013, exceeded two and one-half percent, the ratio may exceed two and one-half percent but shall not exceed the highest such ratio established during that period.⁸⁹ Acts, ch 135, §41; 2012 Acts, ch 1102, §1, 2; 2013 Acts, ch 121, §38, 42

Program Evaluation

Evaluation of the effectiveness of provisions for at-risk students

Review Timeline:

Review and evaluation of the Monticello Community School District At-Risk/Dropout Prevention Plan occurs at the elementary, middle school and high school levels on an bi-annual basis. The program is evaluated by individual student's ability to overcome unique risk factors (resiliency) to work towards academic success. Overall program effectiveness (depending on building) is also evaluated.

Review Criteria/Data:

Staff will document involvement of students in specific programs/services that are utilized to support at-risk students. Documentation of student involvement through presence in regular education classrooms in which at-risk serves are infused, identified program data, and information gathered through the RtI process, and Student Assistance Teams will be used to evaluate student participation in program success. Additionally, surveys, inventories, assessments, Iowa Youth Survey Data, Senior Exit Surveys, graduation rates, academic performance, and standardized test scores will be used to monitor program success.

- An annual review to students identified and services provided is completed by the Building Assistance Team and shared with staff for suggestions and needs that exist how to improve the effectiveness of services given for at-risk students.
- Other factors considered in program evaluation: school drop-out rate, credit recovery successes, improved standardized test scores, improved attendance, decreased office referrals/discipline issues, and other possible factors to be determined.

APPENDIX

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Four Domains of Risk Factors:

Individual Domain: Factors Related to Individual Students

- ❑ **High-risk demographic characteristics** (race/ethnicity, gender, immigration status, limited English proficiency, having limited cognitive abilities, some other type of disability, whether it is physical, emotional, or behavioral-seriously emotionally disturbed or who have learning disabilities are particularly vulnerable to dropping out)
 - ❑ **Early adult responsibilities** (becoming a teen parent, taking a job to help family, taking care of siblings, working more than 20 hours a week and enrolled in school)
 - ❑ **High-risk attitudes, values, and behaviors** (early antisocial behavior, such as violence, substance use, or trouble with the law, early sexual involve, as has spending no time each week reading for fun, having close friends who are involved in antisocial behavior or who have dropped, low occupational aspirations, having low self-esteem and self-confidence
 - ❑ **Poor school performance** (poor academic performance-tests, grades, failing courses- as early as 1st grade continuing throughout elementary school, into middle and high school, being retained/having to repeat a grade, Students with disabilities have been found to have multiple school performance risk factors.)
 - ❑ **Disengagement from school** (are alienated and disengaged from school academically, socially, behaviorally, and psychologically) Academic: absenteeism, having trouble catching up was the second, cutting classes, truancy, incomplete homework, and coming to class unprepared. Behavior: acting up in school, particularly if these behaviors result in repeated suspensions/expulsion, discipline problems, trouble with police). Social: trouble getting along with peers at school or have problems with social skills, lack of involvement in extracurricular activities at school, Psychological: having low educational expectations, uncertain about high school graduation or lacking plans for education beyond high school, trouble getting along with their teachers or just a general dislike of school.)
-

- ❑ **Education stability** (educational mobility through changing schools, particularly when it means attending multiple schools)

Family Domain: Factors Related to Family Background and Home Experiences

- ❑ **Background characteristics** (socioeconomic status (SES)--parental education, income, or occupational level-, youth in non- English-speaking homes, family structure--single-parent, stepparent)
- ❑ **Level of household stress** (substance use, family conflict, family financial or health problems, moving, death, divorce/remarriage)
- ❑ **Family dynamics** (family processes and relationships, quality of early care giving and mother-child relationships, low monitoring of everyday activities, have no curfew on school nights or who have a high degree of regulation)
- ❑ **Attitudes, values, and beliefs about education** (Parents' attitudes, values, and beliefs about education, low parental educational expectations have been found to be linked to higher, if parents also dropped out of school, sibling has dropped out)
- ❑ **Behavior related to education** (parents' actions related to education, rarely talk to their child about school or get involved in school activities, a lack of study aids at home, parent monitoring homework)

School Domain: Factors Related to School Structure, Environment, and Policies

- ❑ **School structure** (private schools, large school size for low SES schools--large, primarily urban, low income high schools)
 - ❑ **School resources** (high student-teacher ratios, students' perception of teacher as poor quality)
 - ❑ **Student body characteristics** (composition of the student body-- high concentrations of low-income or minority students)
 - ❑ **Student body performance** (level of performance of the student body as a whole, percentage of low achievers in math)
 - ❑ **School environment** (negative school environment or climate, environments with high rates of absenteeism or high rates of misbehavior, a high-risk incoming class, feeling unsafe at school, attends a school with a high level of attendance, violence, and/or safety problems, see school as unfair or have low ratings of teacher support, involuntary withdrawal through academic and discipline policies)
-

- ❑ **Academic policies and practices** (Standards-based reforms, accountability and high-stakes testing may be increasing attrition between 9th and 10th grade, retention, high school exit tests, raised standards are often put in place without providing the supports, such as tutoring and summer programs, courses being unrelated to work, no real-world learning, better teachers who made classes more interesting, and kept classes smaller with more individualized instruction)
- ❑ **Supervision and discipline policies and practices** (zero tolerance discipline policies that require automatic arrest/suspension/expulsion for substance possession or sales/weapons possessions, pressures to suspend, expel, or transfer students who misbehave or systematically “discharge” or exclude disruptive and misbehaving students from school)

<i>Community Domain: Factors Related to Communities and Neighborhoods</i>
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- ❑ **Location and type** (higher in urban than suburban or rural schools, freshman had less than a 50/50 chance of graduating four years later, geographic location)
 - ❑ **Demographic characteristics** (impoverished communities, higher proportions of minorities, or those with a large foreign-born population, high numbers of single-parent households or adult dropouts, low unemployment--encourages youth to leave school early)
 - ❑ **Environment** (community conditions--high amount of instability and mobility, urban, high poverty areas, high levels of violence, drug-related crime, and overcrowding)
-
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Significant Risk Factors by School Level*

Risk Category and Risk Factor	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
Individual Background Characteristics			
• Has a learning disability or emotional disturbance		✓	✓
Early Adult Responsibilities			
• High number of work hours		✓	✓*
• Parenthood			✓*
Social Attitudes, Values, & Behavior			
• High-risk peer group		✓*	✓
• High-risk social behavior		✓*	✓
• Highly socially active outside of school			✓
School Performance			
• Low achievement	✓*	✓*	✓*
• Retention/over-age for grade	✓*	✓*	✓*
School Engagement			
• Poor attendance	✓*	✓*	✓*
• Low educational expectations		✓*	✓*
• Lack of effort		✓	✓
• Low commitment to school		✓	✓*
• No extracurricular participation		✓	✓*
School Behavior			
• Misbehavior	✓	✓	✓*
• Early aggression	✓	✓	
Family Background Characteristics			
• Low socioeconomic status	✓*	✓*	✓*
• High family mobility		✓*	
• Low education level of parents	✓	✓	✓*
• Large number of siblings	✓		✓
• Not living with both natural parents	✓	✓	✓*
• Family disruption	✓		
Family Engagement/Commitment to Education			
• Low educational expectations		✓*	
• Sibling has dropped out		✓	✓
• Low contact with school		✓*	
• Lack of conversations about school		✓*	✓

Key: ✓ indicates that the risk factor was found to be significantly related to dropout at this school level in one study. ✓ indicates that the risk factor was found to be significantly related to dropout at this school level in two or more studies.

National Dropout Prevention Center

FIFTEEN EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

1. Systemic Renewal

A continuing process of evaluating goals and objectives will provide an organizational structure that allows each school to develop a learning environment which ensures quality education for all students.

2. Professional Development

Teachers who work with at-risk youth need to feel supported and need to have an avenue by which they continue to develop skills, techniques, and learn about innovative strategies.

3. Early Childhood Education

The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their school experience.

4. Alternative Schooling

Alternative schools today are designed to provide an alternative to dropping out of school, with special attention to the student's individual social needs and the academic requirements for a high school diploma. Alternative schools exist at all levels of K-12.

5. Instructional Technologies

Technology offers some of the best opportunities for delivering instruction which engages students in authentic learning, addresses multiple intelligences, and adapts to students' learning styles.

6. Service Learning

This strategy combines community service with learning activities and is characterized by integrating the academic curriculum with a structured time for organized service experiences that meet actual community needs.

7. Conflict Resolution

Students who don't feel safe at school will not want to stay in school. Dealing with conflict constructively is a skill that when adopted into a school's culture will provide a safe environment for learning.

8. Out Of School Experiences

Since learning happens all day long, 365 days a year, many schools are providing afterschool and summer enhancement programs designed to eliminate information loss, inspire interest in a variety of areas, and expand the knowledge base

9. Community Collaboration

When all groups in a community provide collective support to the school, an infrastructure is created that provides a caring supportive environment where youth can thrive and achieve.

10. Family Involvement

Research consistently finds that family involvement has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school.

11. Reading And Writing Program

Early interventions to help low-achieving students recognize that focusing on reading and writing skills is the foundation for effective learning in all other subjects.

12. Individualized Instruction

A customized individual program allows at-risk students flexibility with the curriculum. It is a strategy that focuses on a one-to-one learning environment.

13. Mentoring/Tutoring

Mentoring is a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust.

14. Learning Style/Multiple Intelligences

When educators show students that there are different ways to learn, students find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners. When educators use multiple intelligences and learning styles to teach the curriculum, they find more students achieve success.

15. Career Education/Workforce Readiness

Workforce readiness programs recognize that youth need specific skills to prepare them to measure up to the larger demands of today's workplace.

"At Risk." *15 Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention*. Iowa Department of Education, n.d. Web. 21 Feb 2012.

<http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=418&catid=58&Itemid=1389>.

Sample Parent Letter

Monticello Community Schools

Central Middle School

217 South Maple Street

Telephone (319) 465-3575

Monticello, Iowa 52310-1600

Fax (319) 465-6959

Brent Meier

Angela Bibb

Principal

School Counselor

Date

Parent Name

Address

City, State Zip

Dear **Parent**

The Monticello Community School District and our school staff is committed to providing programs and services that will insure the academic success of all of our students. It has been determined that your child is eligible for "At Risk and dropout prevention services".

As defined by the Iowa Administrative Code 12.2, "At-risk student" means any identified student who needs additional support and who is not meeting or not expected to meet the established goals of the educational program (academic, personal/social, career/vocation). It has been determined that your child can benefit from some interventions that we have available at the school.

We are writing this letter to inform you that we want to do what we can to insure the success of your child who has been identified as at-risk based on the following criteria:

Criteria Listed Here:

Sincerely,

Principal's Name

Principal's Title