

# Pearl Public School District



## Dropout Prevention Plan 2024-2025

*The mission of Pearl Public School District is to prepare each student to become a lifelong learner, achieve individual goals, and positively impact a global society.*

Board Approved

Date 7/15/2024

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# **Dropout Prevention Plan 2024-2025**

## **Purpose**

A comprehensive Dropout Prevention Plan has been designed for Pearl Public School District to address District and community concerns for students at risk of dropping out of school. The plan is inclusive of goals, objectives, initiatives, and action plans to help all students meet or exceed the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards. The plan is intended to serve as a resource guide and to show what the District is doing to address factors that may cause students to drop out of school.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The Pearl Public School District Dropout Prevention Plan includes objectives, strategic initiatives, projects, and activities required to meet the three overarching goals of the state's plan: (1) increasing and or maintaining a state graduation rate of 85%, (2) reducing the state dropout rate, and (3) reducing the truancy rate. The 2024 graduation rate for Pearl Public School District is 97.1%, and the 2024 dropout rate is 1.4%. Our goal is to maintain a graduation rate at or above 90% and a dropout rate of less than 6%. To achieve this goal, the District will focus on the following three objectives.

1. Improve academic outcomes for students.
2. Expand pathways and opportunities for students.
3. Expand and strengthen home-school-community partnerships.
4. Decrease excessive absenteeism and maintain a 95% or higher ADA at all schools and for the District.

Through a variety of initiatives and action steps, the District will incorporate the National Dropout Prevention Center's 15 Effective Strategies (Appendix A).

Ultimately, this dropout prevention plan will support the various elements of the District's strategic plan.

# Pearl Public School District Strategic Plan

## Core Values

### We believe that

- Everyone has purpose and worth.
- Everyone is responsible for his/her choices.
- Lifelong learning enriches the individual and the community.
- Goal setting and high expectations are the foundation of success.
- Everyone has the potential to make a positive difference.
- Faith-based values create community stability and prosperity.

## Vision

*We are Pearl: learning, serving, achieving.*

## Mission

*The mission of Pearl Public School District is to prepare each student to become a lifelong learner, achieve individual goals, and positively impact a global society.*

## District Goals

- Increase student achievement to an elite level throughout PPSD.
- Increase pathways and opportunities for all students in all grades.
- Provide a safe, secure, and nurturing environment.
- Construct, upgrade, and maintain state of the art facilities.
- Recruit and retain highly effective faculty and staff.

## District Schools and Administrators

<b>Pearl Public School District</b> <b>3375 Highway 80 E</b> <b>Pearl, MS 39208</b> <b>601.932.7921</b>	<b>Chris Chism, Superintendent</b> <b>Dr. Laurin Bailey, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services</b> <b>Cedric Graham, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services</b> <b>Paige Broman, Chief Financial Officer</b> <b>Kevin Knuckles, Director of Technology</b> <b>Ashley Chism, Director of Special Services</b> <b>Bobby Richardson, Assist. Director of Special Services</b> <b>Gina Morgigno, Director of Assessment and Counseling Services</b> <b>Dr. Breanne McLendon, Director of Curriculum, MTSS/504 Coordinator</b> <b>April Harwell, Director of Federal Programs</b> <b>Susan Boyd, Math Instructional Coach</b> <b>Amanda McCarty, English Language Arts Instructional Coach</b>
<b>Pearl High School (9-12)</b> <b>500 Pirate Cove</b> <b>Pearl, MS 39208</b> <b>601.932.7931</b>	<b>Dr. Michael Brewer, Principal</b> <b>Ann Renee Bentley, Assistant Principal</b> <b>John Craven, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Tamara Jackson, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Angie Mangum, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Joel McCarty, Assistant Principal</b>
<b>Pearl Junior High School (6-8)</b> <b>200 Mary Ann Drive</b> <b>Pearl, MS 39208</b> <b>601.932.7952</b>	<b>John Wallace, Principal</b> <b>Tim Jackson, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Chris Lee, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Dennis Philebar, Assistant Principal</b>
<b>Pearl Upper Elementary (4-5)</b> <b>400 Treasure Cove</b> <b>Pearl, MS 39208</b> <b>601.932.7981</b>	<b>Kim Scutch, Principal</b> <b>Ginny Copley, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Austin Wilbanks, Assistant Principal</b>
<b>Pearl Northside Elementary (2-3)</b> <b>3600 Harle Street</b> <b>Pearl, MS 39208</b> <b>601.932.7971</b>	<b>Dr. Nikki Graham, Principal</b> <b>Melissa Lewis, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Dr. Sheila McKay, Assistant Principal</b>
<b>Pearl Lower Elementary (PK-1)</b> <b>160 Mary Ann Drive</b> <b>Pearl, MS 39208</b> <b>601.932.7976</b>	<b>Dr. Tamekia Stewart, Principal</b> <b>Jason Ellis, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Missy Jones, Assistant Principal</b> <b>Stacy Farrar, Early Childhood Education Center Specialist</b>

## Team Members

**Chris Chism, Superintendent of Schools**  
**Dr. Laurin Bailey, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services**  
**Cedric Graham, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services**  
**Dr. Michael Brewer, Pearl High School Principal**  
**John Wallace, Pearl Junior High School Principal**  
**Kim Scutch, Pearl Upper Elementary Principal**  
**Dr. Nikki Graham, Northside Elementary Principal**  
**Dr. Tamekia Stewart, Pearl Lower Principal**  
**Stacy Farrar, Early Childhood Education Center Specialist**  
**Paige Broman, Chief Financial Officer**  
**April Harwell, Director of Federal Programs**  
**Ashley Chism, Director of Special Services**  
**Dr. Breanne McLendon, Director of Curriculum, MTSS/504 Coordinator**  
**Gina Morgigno, Director of Assessment & Counseling Services**  
**Kevin Knuckles, Director of Technology**  
**Richard Smithhart, Director of Athletics**  
**Sondra Odom, School Board President**  
**Becky Tullos-Jones, Career Coach**  
**Brian Quick, Work-Based Learning Teacher**

## Statements of Assurance

On behalf of Pearl Public School District, I hereby submit a local Dropout Prevention Plan to provide goals, activities, and services necessary to meet the three overarching goals of the state dropout prevention plan: 1) Increase the state graduation rate to 85% by 2024-2025; 2) reduce the state dropout rate; and 3) reduce the truancy rate.

I hereby certify that the information contained in this plan is in compliance with the appropriate federal and state laws and regulations.

I hereby certify that our school district will cooperate in carrying out any evaluation conducted by or for the Mississippi Department of Education.

I hereby certify that our school district will submit reports as requested by the Mississippi Department of Education.

I hereby certify that our school district has consulted with parents, community partners, business partners, teachers, school staff, building administrators, and others in the development of this local dropout prevention plan.

I hereby certify that our school district has taken into account relevant, scientifically based research, strategies, and best practices indicating services most effective in preventing dropouts if we focused on students in the earliest grades.

I hereby certify that our school district will prepare and submit an annual progress report on the increasing graduation rate, reducing the dropout rate and reducing the truancy rate.

I hereby certify that our school district will endorse and implement those Fifteen (15) Effective Strategies to promote a reduction in the dropout rate.

I hereby certify that our school district has based the dropout prevention plan on scientifically based research, best practices, and all laws in determining strategies to reduce the dropout rate for student with disabilities under IDEA.

I hereby certify that our school district will evaluate our district dropout prevention plan on an annual basis to determine appropriate changes needed for future school years.

I hereby certify that our District School Board has reviewed and approved this plan for submission to the Mississippi Department of Education.

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**District Name:** Pearl Public School District

**Mailing Address:** 3375 Highway 80 East, Pearl, MS 39208

**Telephone Number:** 601.932.7921      **Fax Number:** 601.932.7992

**Dropout Prevention Plan Point of Contact**

Laurin Bailey, Ed.D. – Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services

**District Superintendent:**

  
Chris Chism

**School Board President:**

  
Sondra Odom



## Identifying At-Risk Students

The District uses the following key indicators to identify students most at risk of dropping out or most “in danger” of failing to attain acceptable levels of academic achievement.

### **Educational Indicators**

- Retention rates of students in kindergarten through second grade
- Passage rate on third grade reading summative assessment
- Passage rates on subject area tests
- Results of formative and progress monitoring assessments (Case, STAR/Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, iReady)
- Two or more grade levels behind peers
- Attendance rates

### **Behavioral Indicators**

- Suspensions
- Referrals
- Chronic absenteeism
- Excessive tardies and/or dismissals

### **Socio-Economic Indicators**

- Free and reduced lunch benefits
- Homeless, migrant, and unaccompanied youth designations
- English Learner designation

## Analysis of Data

The following data was reviewed:

- PPSD Enrollment Trends 2016-2024
- PPSD K-2 Retention Trends 2019-2024
- PPSD Accountability Data 2016-2023
- PPSD Assessment Data 2015-2024
- PPSD ACT Scores 2015-2023
- PPSD Course Offerings
- PPSDS Attendance Data 2015-2024
- Behavior Screener Data
- PPSD Special Services Annual Report
- PPSD Strategic Plan 2022\*
- PPSD Extracurricular/Co-curricular Offerings

## Demographic Data

2023-2024 District Data			
	Elementary School (PK-5)	Middle School (6-8)	High School (9-12)
Number of Schools	3	1	1
Cumulative Enrollment	1999	940	1254
Counselor/Student Ratio	1:665	1:313	1:314

Note. Based on MSIS Month 9 enrollment data.

2023-2024 District Student Demographic Data		
PPSD	Number	Percentage
Female	2050	48.8
Male	2145	51.1
Asian	41	0.97
Black	1743	41.5
Hispanic	472	11.2
Native American	5	0.11
White	1913	45.6
Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian	21	0.50

Note. Based on MSIS Month 9 data. Data may be more/less than 100 percent due to rounding.

2023-2024 School Student Demographic Data						
	Elementary Schools (PK-5)		Middle School (6-8)		High School (9-12)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Female	996	49.77	450	47.87	604	48.16
Male	1005	50.23	490	52.12	650	51.83
Asian	19	0.94	6	0.63	16	1.27
Black	774	38.68	398	42.34	571	45.53
Hispanic	238	11.89	112	11.91	122	9.72
Native American	4	0.19	0	0.0	1	0.07
White	952	47.57	419	44.57	542	43.22
Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian	14	0.69	5	0.53	2	0.15

Note. Based on Month 9 enrollment data. Data may be more/less than 100 percent due to rounding.

## Attendance Data

Average Daily Attendance							
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2022-2023	2023-2024
<b>Pearl Lower Elementary</b>	92.37	93.99	94.63	93.06	93.28	93.99	89.01
<b>Pearl Northside Elementary</b>	94.94	94.47	94.93	94.47	91.83	93.85	92.19
<b>Pearl Upper Elementary</b>	95.91	95.48	95.81	94.44	89.08	93.02	92.21
<b>Pearl Jr High School</b>	94.07	94.72	94.37	96.33	94.41	95.76	93.39
<b>Pearl High School</b>	92.03	91.82	92.85	95.80	90.02	94.15	93.65
<b>District</b>	93.80	94.03	94.34	95.10	91.79	94.32	92.43

*Note.* Based on Month 4 attendance data.

## Accountability Data

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>PLE</b>	B-396 (455)	B-390 (442)	B-420 (442)	A-451 (442)	A-451 (442)	*	A-490 (442)	A-492 (442)	*
<b>PNE</b>	C-380 (455)	B-383 (442)	B-422 (442)	B-432 (442)	B-432 (442)	*	A-504 (442)	A-499 (442)	*
<b>PUE</b>	B-397 (455)	B-434 (442)	B-430 (442)	B-432 (442)	B-432 (442)	*	A-466 (442)	A-488 (442)	*
<b>PJHS</b>	B-403 (455)	B-424 (442)	B-384 (442)	B-431 (442)	B-431 (442)	*	B-394 (442)	C-362 (442)	*
<b>PHS</b>	B-708 (738)	A-787 (787)	B-706 (754)	B-689 (754)	B-689 (754)	*	B-718 (754)	A-799 (754)	*
<b>PPSD</b>	B-643 (672)	A-673 (668)	B-653 (668)	A-686 (668)	A-686 (668)	*	A-691 (668)	A-709 (668)	*

*Note.* Accountability ratings were not assigned for 2021 due to the COVID-19 suspension of state-wide testing in 2020. Accountability Ratings for 2024 are scheduled to be released in September, at which time the plan will be updated.

## District Dropout/Graduation Data

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Dropout Rate</b>	7.3%	7.2%	4.6%	3.3%	5.3%	3.8%	4.7%	2.7%	1.4%
<b>Graduation Rate</b>	87.1%	87.5%	93.5%	94.1%	92.3%	95.5%	93.9%	97.3	97.1
<b>Graduation Met with Credit Recovery Course (students)</b>	NA	NA	51	41	26	3	2	1	0

*Note.* Graduation Met with Credit Recovery data not released at the time of this presentation but will be updated upon release of data.

## Sub-Group Graduation Data

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All Students	93.5%	94.1%	92.3%	95.5%	93.9%	97.3%	97.1%
Males	92.3%	91.0%	89.3%	94.2%	90.8%	96.1%	96.6%
Females	94.5%	96.9%	94.5%	97.0%	96.6%	98.4%	97.7%
Students w/Disabilities	73.9%	60.9%	61.8%	76.5%	70.8%	91.3%	87.5%
White	93.2%	93.6%	93.3%	94.0%	91.0%	97.7%	97.6%
Black	92.3%	95.2%	92.1%	96.4%	97.0%	97.0%	96.0%
Hispanic or Latino	100%	100%	88.5%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Economically Disadvantaged	90.2%	95.4%	89.3%	94.7%	95.2%	97.6%	96.0%

*Note.* \*Disaggregated data was not published by MDE in this year.

## Retention Data K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

<b>K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade Retention Data</b>						
<b>Grade</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b># Retained</b>	<b># Retained</b>	<b># Retained</b>	<b># Retained</b>	<b># Retained</b>	<b># Retained</b>
<b>K</b>	11	16	25	29	26	30
<b>1</b>	11	16	11	5	11	8
<b>2</b>	5	16	5	15	18	27
<b>3</b>	17	5	3	9	7	7
<b>4</b>	9	0	3	6	1	2
<b>5</b>	0	0	2	1	5	2

## Assessment Data

College & Career Readiness Data		
	2023 % PPSD	2023 % MS
All	63.5	48.9
Female	66.7	50.4
Male	60.5	47.5
Black	53.7	30.5
White	69.7	67.0
Hispanic or Latino	84.6	47.8
Economically Disadvantaged	55.3	36.8
Students with Disabilities	11.8	16.0
Non-English Learners	63.4	49.3

*Note.* Based on ACT-tested graduates that met benchmarks in English, reading, and math.

MS Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) Data							
Grade	Course	2022 MAAP % Proficient MS	2022 MAAP % Proficient PPSD	2023 MAAP % Proficient MS	2023 MAAP % Proficient PPSD	2024 MAAP % Proficient MS	2024 MAAP % Proficient PPSD
3	ELA	46.4	57	51.6	70	*	70
3	Math	49.5	58	54.8	74	*	58
4	ELA	43.8	50	53.3	54	*	63
4	Math	45.5	56.4	56.7	59	*	65
5	ELA	46.5	52	51.9	62	*	57
5	Math	36.6	44	44.3	59	*	58
5	Science	58.1	71	64	78	*	74
6	ELA	41.0	37	40.2	41	*	41
6	Math	45.2	40	45.5	42	*	47
7	ELA	38.3	38	40.2	37	*	32
7	Math	46.1	46	55.6	49	*	54
8	ELA	36.3	39	40.6	46	*	34
8	Math	44.8	54	46.1	44	*	49
8	Science	50.5	58	53.3	54.4	*	57
8	Alg I	N/A	94	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
HS	Alg I	64.9	67	65.8	66	*	64
HS	Eng II	44.0	57	50.1	61	*	50
HS	Bio I	59.7	74	60.9	63.9	*	66
HS	USH	69.3	69	71.4	75.6	*	70

*Note.* Most current percentages reflect raw data. \*Data not released at the time of the presentation but will be updated upon release of the data.

## Additional District Data

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Free/Reduced Lunch Rate (%)</b>	64.55	65.60	65.65	66.16	100*	100*	100*	68.95	65.82

*Note. USDA made school meals free of charge to all students due to COVID-19 and continued impacts.*

## Elementary Extracurricular/Co-curricular Activities

### Pearl Lower Elementary School

1. First Grade Singers

### Pearl Northside Elementary

1. Northside Singers
2. Quest

### Pearl Upper Elementary School

1. Honor Choir
2. Jr. Beta Club
3. Quest
4. Robotics
5. Book Club
6. Art Club
7. Student Council

## Secondary Extracurricular/Co-curricular Activities

### Pearl Junior High School

1. Band
2. Choir
3. Creative Projects
4. Creative Writing
5. Jr. Beta Club
6. Junior Thespians
7. NJHS Art Society
8. Pirates for Christ/FCA
9. Quest
10. Robotics
11. SHIPMATES
12. Student Council
13. Superintendent's Advisory Council
14. Technology Student Association (TSA)
15. Yearbook

### Pearl High School

1. American Sign Language Club
2. Band
3. Beta Club
4. Broadcasting Club
5. Chess
6. Choir
7. DECA
8. Debate Club
9. FCA
10. FCCLA
11. Foreign Language Club
12. Health Council
13. HOSA
14. Indoor Percussion\*
15. Key Club
16. Mississippi Scholars
17. National Art Honor Society

18. National Honor Society
19. National Technical Honor Society
20. NJROTC
21. NJROTC Drill Teams
22. Principal's Advisory
23. Role Playing Games
24. Skills USA
25. Student Council
26. Super Scholars
27. Superintendent's Advisory Council
28. Teacher Academy
29. Technology Student Association (TSA)
30. Thespian Troupe 4537
31. Winterguard\*
32. Yearbook

## Secondary Athletic Teams

### Pearl Junior High School

1. Archery
2. Baseball
3. Basketball
4. Bowling
5. Cheerleaders
6. Cross Country
7. Dance Team
8. eSport\*
9. Football
10. Golf\*
11. Powerlifting\*
12. Soccer
13. Softball\*
14. Swimming\*
15. Tennis\*
16. Track
17. Volleyball

*\*denotes PHS team with PJH Sn enbers*

### Pearl High School

1. Archery
2. Baseball
3. Basketball
4. Bowling
5. Cheerleaders
6. Cross Country
7. Dance Team
8. eSport
9. Football
10. Golf
11. Powerlifting
12. Soccer
13. Softball
14. Swimming
15. Tennis
16. Track
17. Volleyball

## Target Group Identified

### Educationally At-Risk

- Students in kindergarten through second grade who are retained
- Students who are two or more grade levels behind peers
- Students in kindergarten through second grade who are not reading on grade level based on formative and summative assessments
- Students who do not meet requirements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade MA AP-ELA assessment
- Students who do not meet MA AP graduation requirements
- Students who are identified as bottom 25%, 504, SpEd, English Learners based on MA AP
- Students who have not met ACT benchmark graduation requirements
- Students who have 5, 10, and 12 absences
- Students who have 5 or more office referrals

### Behavioral Indicators

- Office referrals
- Suspensions
- Chronic absenteeism
- Excessive tardies and/or dismissals

### Socio-Economic Indicators

- Free and reduced lunch benefits
- Homeless, migrant, and unaccompanied youth designations
- English Learners

### Prioritized List of Needs to Address Factors that Contribute to Dropout Rates

1. ACT testers
2. District-wide chronic absenteeism
3. Home-School Collaboration
4. Students who are two or more grades behind
5. English Learners
6. Students who fail 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading summative assessment
7. Students whose assessment data shows no or limited growth
8. Substance use/abuse



## Short Term Goals

1. Improve ADA and decrease chronic absenteeism.
2. Increase academic performance of students (formative assessments and term grades).
3. Decrease number of students who fail subject area tests.
4. Increase the passage rate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading summative assessment.
5. Reduce the number of students retained in kindergarten through second grade without negatively impacting passage rate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading summative assessment.
6. Reduce office/discipline referrals.
7. Increase the number of and variety of communications to families from the District.
8. Expand the pathways for students to include the addition of a Work Based Learning course at Pearl High School, securing a Career Coach through the statewide grant opportunity, and establishing internships (paid and non-paid) for high school students.
9. Implement an Apple ecosystem in all grades that expands opportunities for students to access engaging, effective learning opportunities in traditional settings, as well as non-traditional circumstances.

## Long Term Goals

1. Maintain a graduation rate at 95% or higher.
2. Maintain a dropout rate of 4% or lower.
3. Increase the percentage of students meeting the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT.
4. Increase the number of students taking and earning college credit in advanced placement and dual credit courses.
5. Increase the number of students in the Tier process whose improvements allow them to drop to a less intensive intervention plan.
6. Increase college and career exploration efforts district wide.
7. Expand the number of internships to meet the needs of all qualifying students; establish job shadowing opportunities for undergraduates and junior high school students.
8. Increase the number of students earning Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels of National Career Readiness Certification through WorkKeys testing to improve employment/career opportunities for students.

## Recommendations for Future Actions

Each year the District will reassess its goals and prioritized needs based on data related to dropout and at-risk students:

- Early detection of at-risk students/potential dropouts in grades 1-8
- Analysis of students with significant deficits in ELA and mathematics and support through MTSS of students two or more grades behind

- **Close monitoring and support through MTSS of students two or more grades behind**
- **Identification of and support for students not meeting the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks**
- **Identification of students with significant absenteeism trends**

## Current Actions and Proposed Initiatives

The following information details current actions and proposed initiatives to address factors that have been proven to place students at higher risks for dropping out of high school. Furthermore, these actions and initiatives incorporate the 15 Effective Strategies as presented by the National Dropout Prevention Center. (Appendix A )

***Analyze and monitor student assessment data throughout the year, making instructional adjustments as needed, to ensure students in each tested course demonstrate gains in proficiency (60% or higher), growth of all students and student sub-groups, and the gap between the District and the state average proficiency rates.***

- Establish common expectations, language, and tools across all grade levels to identify high quality teaching, especially in Tier 1.
- Focus instruction in all grades and all courses on the inclusion of reading, writing, and discussion as integral parts of the Tier 1 instructional cycle.
- Utilize Apple products to improve the efficient and effective analysis of student data of all forms.
- Continue to provide professional learning for administrators on the disaggregation of student assessment data, the use Apple products in the data analysis process, and the supervision of teaching and learning to improve student academic achievement.
- Continue to provide professional learning for teachers to support their ability to adjust instruction based on student data, including subgroup data.
- Continue the progress monitoring processes and structures at each building using available data, making adjustments as warranted by the data.
- Continue to implement remediation schedules (before, during, and after school) to provide students with supplemental instruction that utilize evidence-based intervention strategies aligned to student needs.
- Adjust quarterly district data review processes and structures to focus on developing and supporting appropriate responses to the data.
- Continue to provide targeted support (teachers and departments) from the math specialist in areas where progress is not being made.
- Continue to provide targeted support (teachers and departments) from the ELA specialist in areas where progress is not being made.
- Provide additional training for special education teachers in the areas of numeracy and literacy to support student academic achievement.

- Provide professional development for administrators and teachers related to English Language learners.
- Continue to use a variety of data to monitor the progress of students in kindergarten through second grade and address areas of concern for students as an effort to reduce unnecessary retention.

***Reduce the retention rate of students in kindergarten through second grade to the pre-COVID rate without negatively impacting the results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading summative assessment.***

- Improve Tier 1 instruction in kindergarten through second grade by implementing a systematic and explicit phonics curriculum that contains the five essential components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), that is rooted in the Orton-Gillingham approach, and that has as its foundation principles of the Science of Reading research. Implement a high quality ELA curriculum in third through fifth grade that aligns to the curriculum in kindergarten through second grade.
- Implement a new ELA curriculum in sixth through eighth grades that aligns with the principles of the Science of Reading research.
- Implement an updated math curriculum K-5 that is rooted in mathematical practices while increasing the amount of and type of independent practice opportunities for students.
- Implement evidence-based intervention strategies to address student deficits.
- Provide teacher and administrative training on data-informed decision making to improve the Response to Intervention process.

***Implement additional strategies to increase and maintain student daily attendance average to 95% in the district and at each school for MSIS Month 4.***

- Continue to implement attendance policies to limit participation in field trips and special events (such as the graduation ceremony) for students with excessive absenteeism.
- Implement routine monitoring of student attendance, utilizing staff to follow-up on students with chronic absenteeism (attendance mentors, Master Chief Lott, Kim Ellis, and Cedric Graham).
- Continue with the established protocols for contacting parents for daily absences and when student absences reach incremental marks.

- Assign chronically absent students check and connect mentors to monitor attendance.
- Continue with school-based incentives for attendance.
- Continue the MS Scholars and MS Tech Scholars programs.
- Collaborate with youth court system to support school efforts.
- Implement an attendance parental communication plan through existing school communication systems, social media, and church/civic events to emphasize the impact of absenteeism.
- Conduct home visits with administrators and SRO s for truant students, in addition to the dropout specialist making phone calls and home visits for students that develop a pattern of absences.
- Collaborate with the Pearl Police Department to conduct residency checks for students with trends of excessive absences, tardiness, or early dismissals.

***Increase the percentage of students meeting College and Career Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT and WorkKeys assessments.***

- Expand WorkKeys testing opportunities to students who have not met the ACT CCR benchmark goals.
- Continue to provide professional learning opportunities for teachers (ACT prep teacher and content area teachers).
- Improve the integration of ACT-targeted and WorkKeys-targeted test-taking strategies, instruction, and assessment in appropriate courses through the use of ACT-specific curricula.
- Continue to offer ACT prep class at PHS that utilizes ACT preparation curriculum.
- Integrate ACT-targeted curriculum into content area courses.
- Return to traditional grammar instruction in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Offer score-band targeted remediation for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade homerooms, as well as for students who have not met college and career readiness benchmark scores.
- Administer an ACT benchmark assessment to juniors prior to statewide administration of ACT (when funding is available).

- Provide targeted boot camps for seniors (when funding is available) prior to district-administration of the ACT or WorkKeys.
- Administer WorkKeys to seniors who have not met CCR benchmarks (when funding is available).
- Administer ACT to honors sophomores (when funding is available).
- Utilize benchmark data for content-area instructional decisions and remediation efforts.

***Create non-traditional learning opportunities for at-risk students.***

- Offer a Work Based Learning course at PHS that enables students to meet the CCR course requirements through approved employment.
- Utilize a Career Coach to provide opportunities for students to gain career/job information through guest speaker presentation, workplace tours, job shadowing experiences, and internships.
- Identify subgroups of students and the needs of subgroups.
- Continue to provide online learning opportunities (initial earned credit and credit recovery).
- Utilize Apple products to provide access to at-risk students in non-traditional settings.
- Continue to offer credit-bearing courses at PJHS.
- Utilize additional instructional support personnel (tutors, teachers, reading specialist) financed with federal funds and resources on each campus to address learning loss caused by COVID-19 and other factors.
- Continue to create individual student plans for overaged students that establishes a graduation plan through flexible pacing and scheduling.
- Revise the District's promotion and retention policy and create procedures that allow for the development of individualized alternative academic programs for overage students at PJHS to support the student's academic progress and increase opportunities for graduation with his/her age peer cohort.
- Engage the parent in the planning process and establish parental participation requirements.

- Identify resources that will address logistical issues (funding, transportation, food, support services, etc.).
- Expand existing internship opportunities for special education students.

***Alter and/or increase student recognition programs to promote student growth, achievement, attendance, and character development.***

- Continue to implement school-based incentives to promote attainment of goals (School Night Football Games, Pirates of the Quarter, Pirates of the Month, Hard Work Café, Pirate Pride Parties, etc.).
- Continue to implement district-based recognition programs to promote attainment of goals (Growth Celebrations, Student of the Year, etc.).

***Provide parents with information and resources that strengthen the home-school relationship and increase the opportunities and/or changes the ways in which parents can engage in their child's education.***

- Administer an annual needs assessment as part of the climate survey
- Provide EL Liaison for student and family support (when funding and personnel are available)
- Hold EL-Immigrant Parent Meeting to provide information and resources to parents about educational expectations, assessment requirements, and programs of service.
- Continue to incorporate results of the needs assessment survey into school and district programs.
- Continue to host school-based information sessions/events to improve parents' ability to support student learning at home.
- Continue to utilize school-based and district-based protocols and resources to maintain effective home-school communication.
- Use social media and other district communication tools to encourage expanded and diverse participation PTSSO-sponsored events.

***Improve the support offered to students transitioning back to school from a juvenile detention center or other non-traditional institution.***

- Utilize the school TSTs, for students transitioning back to the school from a juvenile detention center, to provide an evaluation of students' academic and behavior situation.

- Provide individualized student support from the school counselors when transitioning back to the school from a juvenile detention center, including the development of a transition agreement.
- Share with students ages 17-21 who have dropped out alternate education/career opportunities offered at Hinds Community College, Camp Shelby, and Job Corp.

***Expand post-secondary learning opportunities.***

- Increase and/or adjust the dual credit course offerings to include more electives.
- Increase Advanced Placement opportunities.
- Establish partnerships with local businesses for post-secondary employment.

***Increase Participation in School Extracurricular & Co-curricular Activities***

- Provide all students with information concerning requirements and meeting times for extracurricular activities; publicize information at orientation events, during homeroom time, and through technology available to students and parents.
- Expand the variety of extracurricular and co-curricular offerings in grades 6-12, including service learning, athletics, and fine arts classes.
- Re-establish pre-COVID procedures for extracurricular and co-curricular preview events and meetings.
- Expand opportunities for students in kindergarten through fifth grade to participate in co-curricular experiences.

***Strengthen Efforts to Support Social Emotional Wellbeing of Students***

- Provide training to staff on the Mississippi Social Emotional Learning Standards to begin implementation.
- Provide Behavior Threat Assessment Management training for administrators, counselors, and MTSS staff to identify, prevent, and address student behaviors that place students at risk of dropping out or committing dangerous behaviors.
- Utilize the additional counselors at PJHS and PHS to provide counseling support to students.
- Implement mentoring and behavior contract pilot programs.
- Continue to partner with Region 8 to provide students and families with counseling services.



- Continue to seek additional resources to offer students and families to address underage drug and alcohol use and abuse.
- Continue to partner with local civic and charitable organizations to meet the basic needs of students and families.

## Appendix A

### 15 Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention

Since 1986, the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N) has conducted and analyzed research; sponsored workshops and national conferences; and collaborated with researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to further the mission of reducing America's dropout rate by meeting the needs of youth in at-risk situations, including students with disabilities.

Students report a variety of reasons for dropping out of school; therefore, the solutions are multi-dimensional. The NDPC/N has identified 15 Effective Strategies that have the most positive impact on reducing school dropout. These strategies appear to be independent, but actually work well together and frequently overlap. Although they can be implemented as stand-alone strategies, positive outcomes will result when school districts or other agencies develop program improvement plans that encompass most or all of these strategies. These strategies have been successful at all school levels from PK-12 and in rural, suburban, and urban settings. The strategies are grouped into four general categories:

Foundational strategies (school-community perspective), early interventions, basic core strategies, and managing and improving instruction.

#### Foundational Strategies

- Systemic Approach
- School-Community Collaboration
- Safe Learning Environments

#### Early Interventions

- Family Engagement
- Early Childhood Education
- Early Literacy Development

#### Basic Core Strategies

- Mentoring/Tutoring
- Service-Learning
- Alternative Schooling
- Afterschool/Out-of-School Opportunities

#### Managing and Improving Instruction

- Professional Development
- Active Learning
- Educational Technology
- Individualized Instruction
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)

## Effective Strategies Defined

**Systemic Approach**—This strategy calls for a systemic approach and process for ongoing and continuous improvement across all grade levels and among all stakeholders, through a shared and widely communicated vision and focus, tightly focused goals and objectives, selection of targeted research-based strategies and interventions, ongoing monitoring and feedback, and data-based decision making. It also requires the alignment of school policies, procedures, practices, and organizational structures and continuous monitoring of effectiveness.

**School-Community Collaboration**—This strategy focuses on the power of an engaged and responsive community where everyone in the community is accountable for the quality of education, resulting in a caring and collaborative environment where youth can thrive and achieve. Critical elements of this type of collaboration rely on effective, ongoing, and multi-dimensional communication so that dropout prevention is a communitywide and ongoing effort.

**Safe Learning Environments**—Safe, orderly, nurturing, inclusive, and inviting learning environments help students realize potential as individuals and as engaged members of society. All students need to be safe, physically and emotionally; to be expected to achieve; to be recognized and celebrated equitably for accomplishments; and to feel genuinely welcomed and supported. A safe and orderly learning environment provides both physical and emotional security as well as daily experiences, at all grade levels that enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills. A comprehensive discipline plan and violence prevention plan should include conflict resolution strategies and should deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. A safe, nurturing, and responsive learning environment supports all students, teachers, cultures, and subgroups; honors and supports diversity and social justice; treats students equitably; and recognizes the need for feedback, innovation, and second chances.

**Family Engagement**—Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on youth's achievement and is one of the most accurate predictors of a student's success in school. Critical elements of this type of collaboration rely on effective, ongoing, and multi-dimensional, two-way communication as well as ongoing needs assessments and responsive family supports and interventions.

**Early Childhood Education**—Birth-to-five interventions demonstrate that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. 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 school through the primary grades.

**Early Literacy Development**—Early literacy interventions to help low-achieving students improve their reading and writing skills establish the necessary foundation for effective learning in all subjects. Literacy development focus should continue P-12.

**Mentoring/Tutoring**—Mentoring is typically a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust. Mentoring offers a significant support structure for high-risk students. Tutoring, also typically a one-to-one activity, focuses on academic support and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs in collaboration with the student's base teacher.

**Service-Learning**—Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility and can be a powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels.

**Alternative Schooling**—Alternative or non-traditional schooling and delivery model options (e.g., alternative times and environments, blended learning, competency-based credit opportunities) provide alternative avenues to credit earning and graduation, with programs paying special attention to the student's individual and social needs, career goals, and academic requirements for obtaining a high school diploma and transitioning successfully to life beyond graduation.

**Afterschool/Out-of-School Opportunities**—Many schools provide afterschool, before-school, and/or summer academic/enhancement/enrichment opportunities (e.g., tutoring, credit recovery, acceleration, homework support, etc.) that provide students with opportunities for assistance and recovery as well as high-interest options for discovery and learning. These opportunities often decrease information loss and can inspire interest in arenas otherwise inaccessible. Such experiences are especially important for at-risk students because out-of-school “gap time” is filled with constructive and engaging activities and/or needed academic support.

**Professional Development**—Adults who work with youth at risk of dropping out need to be provided ongoing professional learning opportunities, support, and feedback. The professional learning should align with the agreed upon vision and focus for the school/agency, the agreed upon instructional framework of high leverage research-based practices and strategies, and the identified needs of the population served. The professional learning opportunities provided should be frequently monitored to determine the fidelity of implementation and need for additional support and feedback.

**Active Learning**—Active learning and student engagement strategies engage and involve students in meaningful ways as partners in their own learning. These strategies include student voice and choice; effective feedback, peer assessment, and goal setting; cooperative learning; thinking critically, creatively, and reflectively; and micro-teaching, discussion, and two-way communication. To be most effective, teachers must provide students with tools and strategies to organize themselves and any new material; techniques to use while reading, writing, and doing math; and systematic steps to follow when working through a task or reflecting upon their own learning.

**Educational Technology**—Instructional Technology can effectively support teaching and learning while engaging students in meaningful, current, and authentic efforts; addressing multiple intelligences; and adapting to students' learning styles. Educational technology can effectively be used in individualized instruction and can not only help prepare students for the workforce, but can empower students who struggle with self-esteem. Effective use of technologies depends upon the timely response to and application of the rapidly expanding choices and matches to identified student needs.

**Individualized Instruction**— Learning experiences can be individualized, differentiated, or personalized (combining paced and tailored learning with flexibility in content or theme to fit the interests, preferences, and prior experiences of each learner). In an environment that is fully

personalized, the learning objectives and content as well as the method and pace may all vary (so personalization encompasses differentiation and individualization).

**Career and Technical Education (CTE)**—Quality CTE programs and related career pathways and guidance programs with P-20W orientation are essential for all students. Youth need workplace skills as well as awareness and focus to increase not only the likelihood that they will be prepared for their careers, but also that school will be relevant to what is next.

