



"Teaching and Learning"

APPROVED

## Tunica County School District

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### Memorandum

TO: Dr. Margie Pulley, Interim Superintendent

FROM: Dr. Valarie Davis, Assistant Superintendent

DATE: August 26, 2021

RE: Dropout Prevention Plan (2021-2022)

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**Interim Superintendent's recommendation to approve the Tunica County School District Dropout Prevention Plan (2020-2021).** This plan will implement programs designed to keep students in school and to lower student dropout rates in accordance with MS Code. (MS Code 37-13-80) (SB Policy 3105).

**School Board Policy: JBA**

# Dropout Prevention Plan

August 24, 2021

School Year 2021-2022



## TUNICA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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*“Teaching and Learning”*

**Tunica County School District**

744 School Street

Tunica, MS 38676

Dr. Margie Pulley, Interim Superintendent

**Dropout Prevention Plan  
2021-2022 – Cover Sheet  
District Schools**

**Tunica County School District**

**Dr. Margie Pulley, Interim Superintendent**

District Contact: Dr. Valarie Davis, Assistant Superintendent  
744 School Street – Tunica, MS 38676  
Telephone: 662-363-2811 / FAX: 662-363-3061

[davisv@tunicak12.org](mailto:davisv@tunicak12.org)

**Schools**

Rosa Fort High School (9-12)  
Mr. Trosiki Pettis, Principal

Alternative School  
Mr. William Pernell, Principal

David Williams Jr., Career and Technical Center  
Mr. Henry Nickson, Director

Tunica Middle School (6-8)  
Ms. Sherwonda Dunn, Principal

Tunica Elementary School (K-5)  
Ms. Natasha Bates, Principal

Dundee Elementary School (K-5)  
Mrs. Yakima Moore, Principal

Robinsonville Elementary School (K-5)  
Ms. Angela Ellington, Principal

# TCSD Dropout Prevention Team

<b>Team Member</b>	<b>Position</b>
Dr. Margie Pulley	Interim Superintendent
Dr. Stanley Ellis	Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Valarie Davis	Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Laquita Moore	Director of Special Education
Mr. Derrick Dace	Federal Programs Director
Mr. William Pernell	Alternative School Director
Mr. Trosiki Pettis	Principal, Rosa Fort High School
Mrs. Shirley Harris	Counselor, Rosa Fort High School
Ms. Kabreca Henderson	Counselor, David Williams Jr. Career & Tech.
Ms. Sherwonda Dunn	Principal, Tunica Middle School
Mrs. Vicki Cooper	Counselor, Tunica Middle School
Mrs. Shirley Temple	MSIS/SAMs Manager
Mr. Willie Bryant	Truancy Officer

# Dropout Prevention Plan

## School Year 2021-2022

### *The Purpose*

A comprehensive Dropout Prevention Plan has been developed for the Tunica County Schools to address district and community concerns for students at-risk of dropping out of school. The plan is inclusive of goals, objectives, initiatives, projects, and procedures. The plan is intended to serve as a resource guide not only for the district but also for the community.

### **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 achieve acceptable levels of academic achievement.

#### Educationally at-risk

- Not on grade level (two or more grades behind their peers)
- High absenteeism
- Repeated office referrals, suspensions, or expulsions
- Poor grades/performance in core subjects

#### Economically at-risk

- Free lunch
- Homeless or migrant
- English Language Learners

### **Goals and Objectives**

The Tunica County School District’s Dropout Prevention Plan is inclusive of objectives, strategic initiatives, and projects and activities required to meet the three overarching goals for the state’s prevention plan:

- Maintaining or exceeding the state graduation rate above 85% during 2021-2022
- Reducing the state dropout rate by 50% 2021-2022
- Reducing the truancy rate by 50% by 2021-2022

The Tunica County School District’s current graduation rate is 93%, which exceeds the states goal of 85%.

The Tunica County School District will focus on the following four goals.

1. Provide opportunities for all students to experience academic success at all grade levels
2. Improve early identification of students at-risk of dropping out
3. Reduce risk factors associated with dropping out of school
4. Strengthen the Home-School-Community Partnership

## Statement of Assurance

On behalf of the Tunica County 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:

- Maintaining or exceeding the state graduation rate to 85% during 2021-2022
- Reducing the districts' dropout rate by 50% by 2021-2022
- Reducing the truancy rate by 50% by 2021-2022.

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 increasing the graduation rate, reducing the dropout rate and reducing the truancy 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 students 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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**Dropout Prevention Team Leaders:**

Name: Dr. Stanley K. Ellis

Title: Assistant Superintendent

Name: Dr. Valarie M Davis

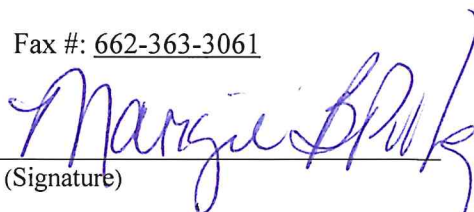
Title: Assistant Superintendent

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 758, Tunica, MS 38676

Telephone #: 662-363-2811

Fax #: 662-363-3061

District Interim Superintendent: Dr. Margie Pulley

  
(Signature)

### District Data Form

District Name: Tunica County

Graduation Rate: 93.1

Dropout Rate: 6.1

Truancy Rate: 17%

	Elementary School		Middle School		High School	
<b>School Data</b>						
Number of Schools	3		1		1	
Cumulative Enrollment	983		420		466	
Counselor / Student Ratio	3:983		1:420		1:466	
<b>Student Demographic Data</b>						
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Female	483	49.1%	195	46.42%	247	50.22%
Male	496	50.4%	230	54.76%	232	49.78%
Asian	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Black	95.11%	95.29%	414	98.57%	464	97.31%
Hispanic	34	4.7%	6	1.40%	2	3.7%
Native American	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
White	.0142%	0%	0	0%	0	0%

**Staff Demographic Data (Teachers / Administrators)**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	68	90.66%	29	76.31%	40	70.17%
Male	7	9.33%	9	23.68%	17	29.82%
Asian	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Black	67	89.33%	37	97.36%	48	84.21%
Hispanic	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Native American	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
White	8	10.66%	1	2.63%	9	15.78%

**District Data Form (Continued)**

<b>MAAP Data – Percent Proficient or Above (Level 4 &amp; Level 5)</b>				
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Language Arts</b>	<b>Math</b>	
Grade 2	NA	NA	NA	
Grade 3	NA	37.9%	45.2%	
Grade 4	NA	25.1%	32.2%	
Grade 5	NA	23%	30.6%	
Grade 6	NA	20.7%	42.9%	
Grade 7	NA	21.1%	44.3%	
Grade 8	NA	25%	41.6%	
<b>High School Subject Area Tests – Percent Proficient or Above</b>				
	<b>Algebra I</b>	<b>US History</b>	<b>Biology</b>	<b>English II</b>
All Grades	39.8%	38.9%	57.8%	28.3%
<b>Tunica Middle School Subject Area Tests – Percent Proficient or Above</b>				
	<b>Language Arts</b>		<b>Math</b>	
All Grades	25.9%		39.3%	
<b>Elementary Schools Subject Area Tests – Percent Proficient or Above</b>				
Dundee	43.4%		64.5%	
Robinsonville	23.5%		29.6%	
Tunica	26%		29.9%	

# Tunica County School District Dropout Prevention Plan 2021-2022

## **Goal 1: Reduce retention rates in grades kindergarten, first, and second in the Tunica County School District.**

1. The district works collaboratively with the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Literacy Coaching Initiative to ensure teachers provide high-quality instruction and intervention.
  - Kindergarten through second grade teachers receives instructional support (planning and delivery) to ensure classroom instruction is systematic, sequential, explicit, and comprised of best practices based on the five components of reading.
  - Kindergarten through second-grade teachers receives data coaching to ensure instruction and intervention is based on data derived from universal screeners, benchmark assessments, and diagnostic assessments.
  - Kindergarten through third-grade students, scoring within the lowest category on state approved universal screeners, receive intervention support documented on the state of Mississippi Individual Reading Plan (IRP). Building principals and the MDE Literacy Coaches monitors IRP fidelity.
  - Third through fifth-grade students, scoring within the lowest category on state approved universal screeners, receive intervention support documented on the state of Mississippi Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) document. Building principals and MDE Literacy Coaches monitors MTSS fidelity.
2. The district hired reading specialists to support effective reading instruction and build teacher capacity through professional development and collaboration.
  - The literacy specialists facilitate professional development session for teachers on the school and district level.
  - The literacy specialists provide observations with feedback, model lessons, co-teaching, and debriefing with actionable next steps as services for K-5 teachers district-wide.
3. The district has Pre-kindergarten classes at all elementary schools. The Pre-kindergarten classes are members of the ICS Head Start Collaborative. Membership in the collaborative provides Pre-kindergarten teachers with resources to ensure Pre-kindergarten students receive instruction that is effective and developmentally appropriate.
  - The Head Start collaborative tracks developmental progress of Pre-kindergarten students using the Battelle Screener.
  - The Head Start collaborative provides funding for classroom supplies, field trips, snacks, and parental involvement activities.
  - Early learning specialists from The ICS Head Start collaborative provide instructional support and feedback to Pre-kindergarten teachers at each site within the district.
  - The Head Start collaborative provides professional learning opportunities for Pre-kindergarten teachers.

## **Goal 2: Targeting subgroups that need additional assistance to meet graduation requirements in the Tunica County School District.**

Tunica County School District continues to work on increasing the graduation rate by focusing intensely on “targeted subgroups”. The district put in place strong instructional leaders and effective teachers “to ensure that all students are prepared to meet college and career ready standards”

Tunica County School District updated its Drop Out Prevention Plan and worked diligently on getting students to pass the Mississippi Department of Education’s End of Year assessments that are required for graduation. In addition, the district put in place a plan to intentionally target inclusion students to ensure that they graduated with diplomas, not certificates that increase the district’s graduation rate significantly. Special education teachers worked side-by-side with the regular education teachers to support inclusion students, as well as, regular education students and the special education teachers provided additional resource time to target identified deficit areas with inclusion students. The School District also infused intervention blocks in all schools K-12 to target the low 25 percentile students and the district serviced struggling students in the extended day programs district-wide. The district also ensure that Career Tech opportunities are available for all students, as well as, increasing students ACT scores, that can be used as end of course options.

In addition, the district focuses on servicing the whole child through academic interventions and behavioral interventions utilizing the Mississippi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Teams were developed in all schools and the district hired a behavioral specialist. Counselors were trained in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and worked with students and parents to address individual student needs. The TCSD placed an emphasis on building parental and community support and partnerships.

Tunica County School District began to make data driven decisions. These decisions impacted the school district in sufficient ways. The district tracked academic data, MTSS data, attendance data (School Status), discipline data, counselor referral data and extra curricular activity data to see the impact and correlation it had on student achievement. The district also began to set goals for the district and the individual schools. The schools allowed their teachers and students to set individual goals as well. All departments were focused on teaching and learning, from the food service department to the transportation department to the business office. Everyone became invested in our students.

The district also implemented Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) as its’ Research Based Instructional Model district-wide and professional development became a key component in increasing the district’s graduation rate. The TCSD focused on teaching and learning by increasing teacher capacity to improve student outcomes. Weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC) were put in place to build teacher knowledge and increase their ability to impact student learning. Likewise, TCSD focused on creating a culture of learning that allowed students to learn and grow in a safe school environment. A Positive Behavior Management System was put in place at all schools, where students were rewarded for positive behavior and academic growth. The schools were allowed to plan academic field trips as incentives to the students to improve their academic achievements and their behavior.

Tunica County School District has put the following learning procedures in place to ensure the districts' focus, Teaching, Learning, and Safety of all students.

### **Inclusion Students**

- Special education teachers collaborate with general education teachers in efforts to provide instruction to students for major coursework.

- Teachers provide resource, remediation and/or tutorial support in efforts to ensure students are working towards meeting goals/objectives. This instruction will be provided in addition to instruction regarding major coursework.
- Teachers spend additional time, using a variety of methods (e.g. Zoom, in-person and phone conference, FaceTime, email), providing one-to-one or small group instruction, clarifying instructions regarding assignments, or performing wellness checks.
- Instructional videos are used as a method of delivering instruction, allowing students the opportunity to watch the video numerous times in the acquisition of a skill.
- Accommodations are provided to individual students based on their individual need.
- Modifications are made to assignments for individual students.

### **English Learners and Migrant Students**

- ELL teachers will collaborate with general education teachers to determine individual students' needs. The teachers design and provide instructional supports and accommodations to address those needs.
- ELL teachers provide instructional opportunities utilizing online and/or web-based programs that can translate materials for the students and the parents
- ELL teachers and ELL paraprofessionals will make direct contact with students and/or parents on a bi-weekly basis.
- ELL teachers may identify additional learning programs to provide differentiated opportunities to ELL students to access remotely.

### **Intellectual Gifted Students**

- Gifted education teachers engage in on-going professional development to learn the best practices for differentiated instruction in the classroom and on a virtual learning platform.
- Gifted education teachers provide exploratory activities that spark students' interest by utilizing various resources, manipulatives, and/or web-based programs that accommodate students' learning needs and allow scholars to work at their own pace.
- Gifted education teachers work collaboratively with grade level and content area teachers to identify additional differentiated learning opportunities for students as needed.
- Gifted education teachers provide optional learning activities for students and links to extension activities to foster growth after the school day is over.
- Gifted education teachers assist with social-emotional development by providing students access to their peers through learning opportunities that allow students to interact and work collaboratively.
- Gifted teachers direct contact with students and/or parents, through a virtual platform or phone calls, on a weekly basis to provide technical assistance or report a student's progress.

### **Students Classified as Homeless or Identified as Poverty**

- The district's Homeless/Parent Liaison is in contact frequently with students and families to check on basic needs (food, shelter, other basic needs). The liaison will work with families to provide resources, if needed, and/or connect the families with community resources.
- The district's Homeless/Parent Liaison assists students experiencing housing transition or without needed resources with obtaining resources. The focus will ultimately be effective communication between students/their families and teachers/schools.
- Teachers and Homeless/Parent Liaison monitor students' progress. Monitoring and supports will include academic supports and social-emotional needs.

## **504 Students**

- The general education teachers provide all students who have an active 504 their specific accommodations.
- Teachers provide instructional opportunities utilizing online and/or web-based programs that are being used by the 504 students.
- Teachers may provide “hard copy/hands on” educational activities and/or technology devices for students to engage in at home.
- Teachers may identify additional learning programs to provide differentiated opportunities for 504 students to access remotely.

### **Goal 3: Developing dropout recovery initiatives that focus on students age seventeen (17) through twenty-one (21), who dropout of school in the Tunica County School District.**

The Tunica County School District has partnered with multiple agencies to address students who have dropped out of school, Coahoma Community College GED program, and the Tunica County Employment Agency. In addition, the district’s curriculum software company Grade Results, which is accredited with the Mississippi Department of Education, offers adult education courses to help students to get a high school diploma. The district offers WorkKeys through the district’s CTE program to help and assist those students who are seeking job opportunities.

### **Goal 4: Addressing how students will transition back to Tunica County School District from the juvenile detention centers.**

Transition plans are put in place when students are preparing to return to the home school environment. The schools’ MTSS team and counselors develop specific plans for social emotional supports and behavioral supports. Individual student goals are set in the transition plan and meetings are scheduled with case managers, assigned mentors, and parents. The district utilizes Edgenuity (SEL) in the character education courses through modules and course work.

The returning students go through an interview process and are given diagnostic screeners and individual academic goals are set for academic success. The students are also put in recovery programs on Grade Results and Apex Learning with specific tutoring pathways with a continuation of academic classes through the Grade Results.

School staff, administration, counselors, student mentors, Youth Court, and parent’s work together to ensure that the students receive the support they need.

## **LEFLORE COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER SCHOOL REQUEST FOR RECORDS**

The student listed below has been detained in the Leflore County Juvenile Detention Center. Please submit to the Leflore County Juvenile Detention Center School the information listed below. All requests for records must be submitted within forty-eight (48) hours of request. If the student has an IEP, FBA or BIP, please submit within twenty-four (24) hours of request.

Fax information to **Clell Ward** at (662) 453-7815 or email at [cward2@glcsd.org](mailto:cward2@glcsd.org)

If you have questions or concerns, contact me at **(662) 451-7110**

Indicate if the student currently receives special education and/or related services.

Student Name:	District/School:
<b>Attendance Clerk Name/Email:</b>	
General Education: ( ) Yes ( ) No	Currently Enrolled: ( ) Yes ( ) No
	Special Education: ( ) Yes ( ) No

**ITEMS REQUESTED**

Place a check in the space next to the items being submitted	
<b>Cumulative Record Insert / Transcript Document</b>	<b>Required</b>
<b>Discipline Record Document</b>	<b>Required</b>
<b>Attendance Record Document</b>	<b>Required</b>
Current Schedule	
Assignments and Computerized Instructional Program information and Password(s)	
Current Grades (Report card or progress report)	
MTSS or MET Information	
Formal Assessments	
Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)	
<b>Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Document (Exceptional Ed Students)</b>	<b>Required Document (Exceptional Ed Students)</b>
Universal/Diagnostic Screeners	
I-CAP/Choices (Results or password)	
Medical Information (Information from medical professional describing any illness or medication for student)	
Truancy Letter (Provide copy if student has missed 5 or more consecutive days)	
Withdrawal/Drop Form (Include only if the student is no longer enrolled in your school district)	
Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) or Behavior Support Plan	

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Personnel Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**District Initiatives, Interventions, Support Programs & Services**

## 1. Provide opportunities for all students to experience academic success in K-12.

- **Implement high quality Tier instruction for all students K-12.**

- **Professional Development:** District and federal professional development funds are used to train teachers on curriculum trends that will better prepare them to meet student needs, develop effective, innovative teaching strategies that increase student achievement, enhance teacher performance, and help increase the graduation rate and decrease the dropout rate. In addition, the Tunica County School District has provided intensive training for all staff utilizing the district's research based instructional model, which is Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI).
- **MTSS Teams:** The Tunica County School District has school based MTSS teams established in each school in the district. These individuals keep records of progress monitoring and help teachers with scientifically, research-based interventions to be utilized for student individualized instruction. (Appendix B)
- **New Teacher Mentoring Program:** The district utilizes a mentoring program for first year teachers and teachers new to the district. The goal is to build strong teacher capacity, improve student performance and teacher retention

## 2. Improve early identification of students at risk- of dropping out

- **Utilize a data system that tracks student's grades, progress, attendance, and behavior.**

- **Student Administration Manager:** SAMS is the district-wide monitoring information system used to track student attendance, grades, and discipline records.
- **Measures of Academic Progress:** MAAP is used for students in K-5 to access performance in reading and math and provide data to help inform instruction.
- **ELS Test Tracker/ Online Writing:** This online test tracker provides a history of test data to help administrators and teacher make informed instructional decisions.
- **LinkIt & Grade Results:** Formative assessment provided information of students' progress toward mastery of Mississippi Framework objectives.
- **Edgenuity (SEL) & Mental Health Therapist:** Provides schools with specialized services in the areas of behavioral issues, adapting behavioral strategies, and sustaining effective school-wide disciplinary policies that are student centered.
- **MSIS Data Clerks:** School level MSIS clerks track and report students' attendance daily.
- **I Ready, STAR Renaissance, & Grade Results:** Used to provide diagnostic, instructional planning, progress monitoring and goal setting.
- **EDI Explicit Direct Instruction** - Is used as the districts research based instructional model to teach first and check for understanding.

### 3. Reduce risk factors associated with dropping out of school & strengthen the Home-School-Community Partnership.

- *Provide a system that will immediately review multiple points of data and quickly take action to provide interventions for student in danger of failing.*
- *Provide opportunities for the home and school community to collaborate, discuss, and explore options to increase the graduation rates, and decrease the dropout rate*
- *Develop individualized instructional plans for all students entering ninth grade to keep them on track for graduation.*
- *Provide appropriate program options to increase the graduation rates.*
- *Provide support programs for secondary students to recover course credit.*
  - ***Active Parent:*** Active Parent Online is a software program that allows parents in the Tunica County School District to review their children's grades, attendance, discipline, and other school news weekly. After parents register online, they are given a secure record of user name and password. The account is then activated by the SAMS/MSIS Manager. Parents can log on at the Tunica County Schools' website to log in and use the program. Once registered the passwords and user name remain the same each year.
  - ***Automatic Phone Dialer:*** All schools have the ability of sending out all-call-messages to parent about important events going on in the school. The district also has the same capability of sending out all-call message to employees and parents of students in the district that may be absent.
  - ***Title I Updates:*** The Office of Federal Programs will provide to parents by way of the their webpage Title I community information to keep them informed of what is going on in the school community.
  - ***Title I Advisory Meeting:*** Title I Advisory meetings will be held at least twice a year to meet with stakeholders and provide them with resources regarding Title I Funds and Allocations within the district.
  - ***District Dropout Prevention Team:*** The dropout prevention team monitors the implementation of the district's dropout prevention plan.
  - ***Head Start Partnership:*** The district has a collaborative agreement with ICS HeadStart. The classes are all taught by highly qualified teachers from the district. The relationship provides additional professional development and enrichment that enhances the cognitive development with an economically disadvantage age group at the most critical time during their educational journey.
  - ***Region I Mental Health:*** The Region I Mental Health Agency works with the Tunica County Schools and provides mental health and behavior modifications for students with social and emotional challenges.

- ***School Safety Officers:*** The district partners with the Tunica County Sheriff Department to work with students and staff. Officers may assist the administration with student/parent conferences, discipline matters, and counseling interventions for student issues.
  
- ***PTO/PTA:*** Parent organizations provide an avenue to parents to get involved with the school experience. In addition, the district periodically convenes P-16 council meetings and annual Superintendent's Community Meetings to provide updates to the school community.