

TUPELO PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
DROPOUT PREVENTION PLAN



Dr. Rob Picou, PH.D.

2024-2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VERIFICATION OF BOARD PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL 3

DISTRICT TEAM MEMBERS 4

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM 4

DISTRICT DATA 5,6

TPSD GRADUATION RATE DATA 7

NEEDS ASSESSMENTS OUTCOMES 8

 Reasons for Dropping out 8

DISTRICT GOALS AND STRATEGIES 9

 Reducing Retention Rates 9

 Attendance Goal 9

 Reducing Retention in Grades K-2 9

 Targeting Subgroups & Graduation Requirements 10

 Prioritized List of Targeted Students 10

 Critical Academic Supports 10

 Mentoring Model 11

 Academic Success Goal 12

 Student Learning 12

 Professional Learning Systems 12

 Increase Graduation Rate 13

 Positive Behavior Supports 14

 Personalized Education Planning 15

 Recovery Initiatives 16

 EdOptions Academy and Plato 16

 PACE Program 16

 Transition from Juvenile Detention Center 17

VERIFICATION OF BOARD PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL

On behalf of the Tupelo Public School District, I hereby submit a local Dropout Prevention Plan to provide goals, activities and services necessary to meet the following overarching goals of the state dropout prevention plan: 1) Reducing retention rate; 2) Targeting Subgroups & Graduation Requirement; 3) Academic Success; 4) Recovery Initiatives and 5) Transitions from Juvenile Detention Centers.

I hereby certify that the information contained in this plan follows 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 considered 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 will endorse and implement the 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 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.

Dropout Prevention Team Leader

Name: Dr. Brock English

Title: Assistant Superintendent

Mailing Address: 72 South Green Street, Tupelo MS 38804

Telephone#: 662-841-8850 Fax#: 662-841-8887

District Superintendent:



School Board Member:



DISTRICT TEAM MEMBERS

Dr. Rob Picou	Superintendent
Dr. Brock English	Team Leader
Kim Britton	Team Sponsor
Art Dobbs	Team Sponsor
Genna McAlpin	Team Sponsor
Hope Huey	Dropout Prevention Team Member
Dr. Melissa Thomas	Dropout Prevention Team Member
Mark Enis	Dropout Prevention Team Member
Jennifer Chandler	Dropout Prevention Team Member
Dr. Terry Harbin	Dropout Prevention Team Member
Evet Topp	Dropout Prevention Team Member
Aubrey Bell	Dropout Prevention Team Parent Member
Lisa Sandroni	Dropout Prevention Team Teacher Member
Dr. Kristy Luse	Dropout Prevention Team Community Member

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Superintendent: Dr. Rob Picou
Deputy Superintendent: Kim Britton
Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Brock English
Director of Elementary Curriculum: Dr. Amy Ferguson
Director of Instructional Technology: Misty McRae
Director of Technology: T.J. Higgins
Director of Educational Enhancement and Innovative Development: Art Dobbs
Director: Dr. Tanisha Smith, Structured Day Program
SPED Director: Genna McAlpin
Principal: Dr. Melissa Thomas, Tupelo High School
Principal: Mark Enis, Tupelo Middle School
Principal: Dr. Anthony Golding, Pierce Street Elementary School
Principal: April West-McIntosh, Carver Elementary School
Principal: Dr. Terry Harbin, Milam Elementary School
Principal: Christy Carroll, Thomas Street Elementary School
Principal: Kimberly Foster, Joyner Elementary School
Principal: Wesley McCullough, Lawhon Elementary School
Principal: Carmen Gary, Parkway Elementary School
Principal: Talina Knight, Lawndale Elementary School
Principal: Katie Coon, ECEC
Principal: Dr. Heather Cartwright, Rankin Elementary School

District Report Card 2022 - 2023

For more detailed information, please visit <https://msrc.mdek12.org>.

A Tupelo Public School District Tupelo, MS

72 South Green Street
Tupelo, MS 38804

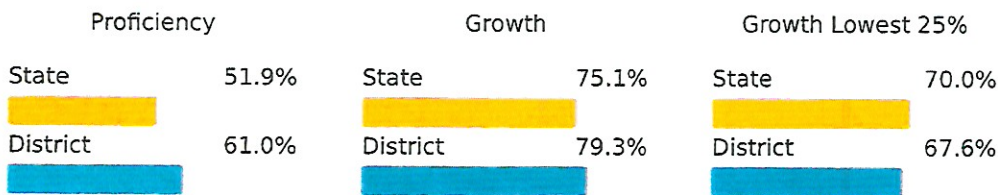
Robert Joseph Picou
rpicou@tupeloschools.com

School Accountability Grade Components

Mississippi's accountability system assigns "A" through "F" letter grades for schools and districts. Grades are based on student achievement, student growth, student participation in testing, and other academic measures.

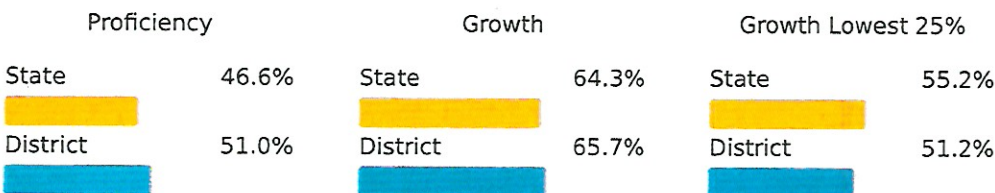
Math

Measurements of student performance on the statewide math assessment.



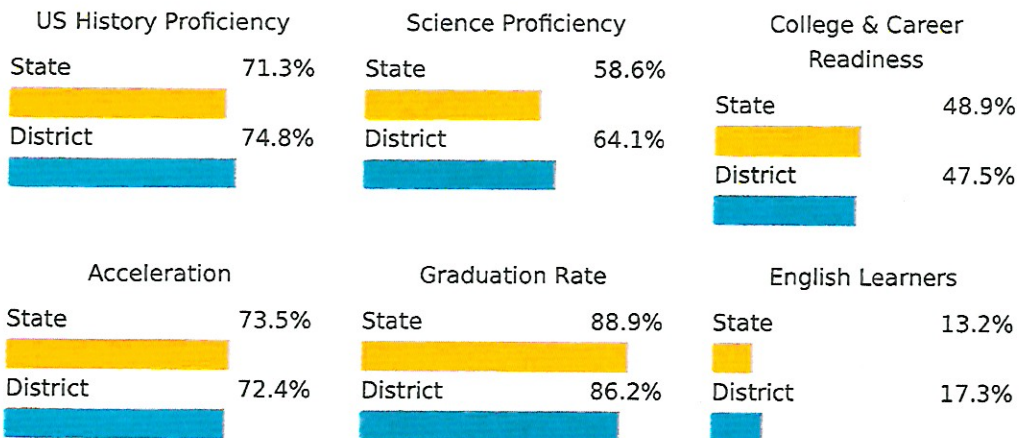
English

Measurements of student performance on the statewide English language arts (ELA) assessment.



Other Measures

Other measurements of student performance that factor into the accountability grade.



Teacher Data

536.8

Teachers



77.6%

Experienced Teachers

0.8%

Provisional Teachers

99.2%

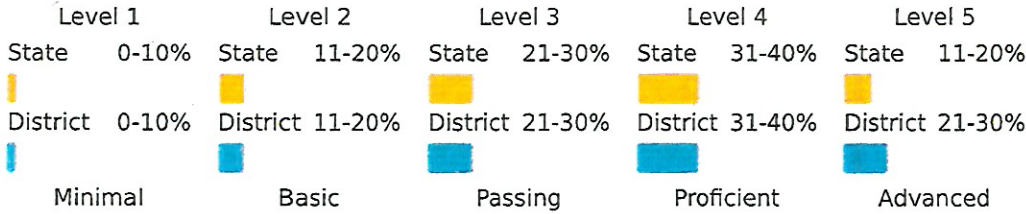
In-Field Teachers

Detailed Assessment and Other Data

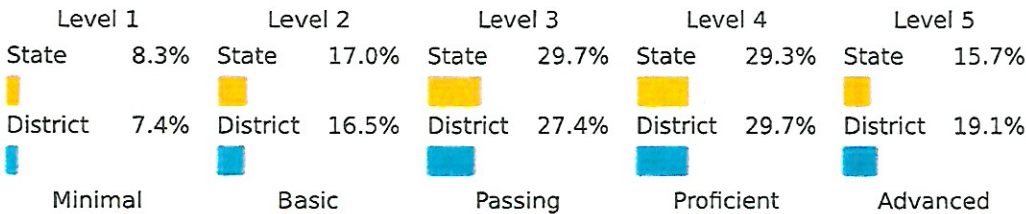
Student Performance

The following information shows each level of student performance on statewide assessments.

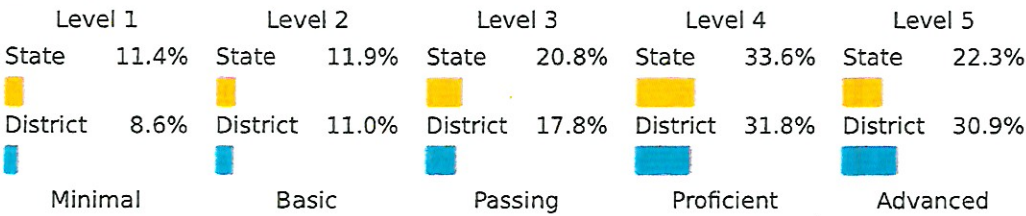
Math



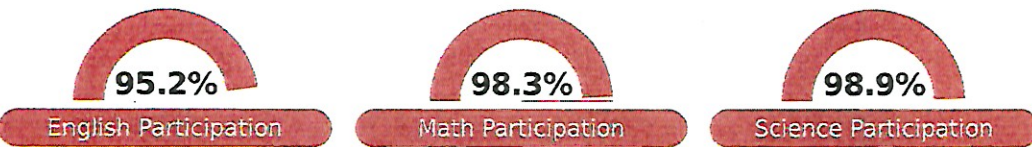
English



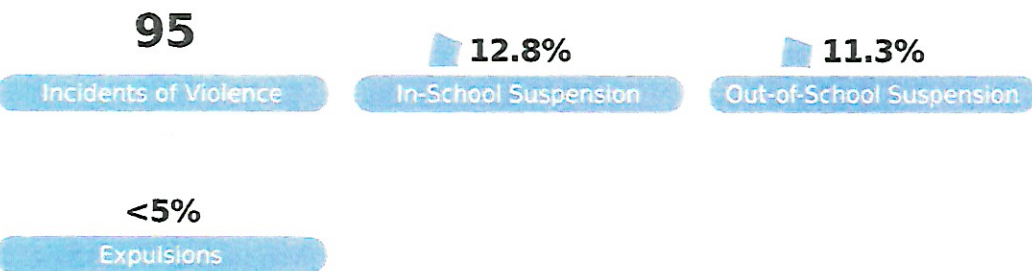
Science



Student Assessment Participation



Discipline



Other Data



25.8%

Chronic Absenteeism



\$11,779.81

Per-Pupil Expenditure



75.3%

Post-Secondary Enrollment



57.3%

Advanced Course Participation

TPSD Graduation Rate Data
Accountability Year 2022-2023

Group	District	State
All	86.2	88.9
Female	88.3	92.1
Male	84.3	85.8
Black or African American	79.3	87.9
White	93.4	90.3
Asian	Not reported	94.3
Hispanic or Latino	81.1	84.6
Homeless	Not reported	71.4
Non-Homeless	Not reported	89.2
Students with Disabilities	64.9	67.1
Students without Disabilities	Not reported	91.5
English Learners	69.2	66.9
Non-English Learners	Not reported	88.6

Note: The following were not reported by subgroups.....

Homeless

Non-Homeless

Students without Disabilities

English Learners

Non-English Learners

Also note: Waiting on the 2022-2023 data

NEEDS ASSESSMENTS OUTCOMES

Reasons for Dropping out

School factors that may contribute:

- Suspension as a punishment
- Parents unaware of absences
- Teachers not understanding diverse student needs
- Unidentified special needs
- School retentions
- Neglect homework/fail tests
- Failure to earn Carnegie units
- Poor relationships with other students
- Sarcasm from teachers, "Why are you here?"
- Feeling like they can't catch up

Home/ Community factors that may contribute:

- Financial
- Neglect
- Teen pregnancy/parent
- Parent alcoholism or drug abuse
- Negative role models
- Parent/guardians do not value education
- Juvenile delinquency

Personal factors that may contribute:

- Poor academic performance resulting in poor self-esteem
- Unmet mental health needs
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Lack of vision as means to achieve goals
- Caring for siblings
- Work
- Students feeling alone, overwhelmed, invisible

DISTRICT GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Reducing Retention Rates

Attendance Goal

- District Purpose of Goal
 - Reduce the number of unexcused absences in grades K-12.
 - Reduce the number of absences in grades 7-12.
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - The Attendance Officer will work with students and families to reduce the number of absences in grades 7-12.
 - Students absent more than *five times without an excuse will be referred to support personnel within the school to include administration, counselors, and the MTSS Team.
 - In grades K-6, family school coordinators, counselors, and principals will work to reduce the number of unexcused absences by working with students and families.
- Who Is Involved?
 - Building Administrators
 - Teachers
 - Dropout Attendance
 - Counselors
 - Family School Coordinators
 - SEL Counselors
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - Increase of attendance rate by 5%

Reducing Retention in Grades K-2

- District Purpose or Goal
 - Provide early literacy instruction in language, phonemic awareness, and phonics skills.
 - Provide regular guided oral reading with a focus on fluency.
 - Provide direct teaching of comprehension strategies.
 - Provide early interventions to struggling readers using multi-sensory methods, Early Prevention of School failure, and instructional technology.
- Who Is Involved?
 - Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Principals
 - Curriculum Directors, Federal Programs Director, Director of Special Education
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - Early Literacy
 - Early Childhood Education
- Who Is Involved?
 - District Administrators
 - Sped Director

- Curriculum Directors
- Counselors
- Interventionists
- 504 Coordinators
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - At least 55% of elementary students will score proficient or above in Reading and Language as measured by MAAP.
 - Reduce the number of retentions in grades K-12 by 5%. Improve the GPA in core subjects.

Targeted Subgroups & Graduation Requirements

Prioritized List of Targeted Students

- Students who fail state exams
- Students who are one or more years behind their peers
- Students who are truant
- Students with children
- Students considered homeless
- Students with history of emotional and/or behavioral issues
- Students with learning disabilities

- Students who are academically gifted and need challenging opportunities

Critical Academic Supports

- District Purpose of Goal
 - Develop subject-area test preparation classes.
 - Instruction of MS Frameworks and CCSS
 - Instructional strategies based on student learning
 - Provide in-school and after-school tutoring for students
 - Provide career training to students placed at the alternative school.
 - Develop appropriate academic supports for
 - EL students
 - SPED students
 - Dyslexic students
 - Low-achieving students
 - Develop district-level MTSS Team to monitor building-level teams to ensure that process and timelines are being followed.
 - Collect data such as common assessment scores and nine weeks grades to determine student progress.
 - Provide Edmentum credit opportunities and EdOptions.
 - Provide career counseling at THS.
 - Provide sheltered classes at each building so that EL and Dyslexic students can have specially trained teachers teaching content.

- Who Is Involved?
 - Superintendent, TMS and THS Principals, Alternative School Principal, TCTC Principal
 - Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Superintendents
 - Director of SPED, EL Coordinator
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - After-school Opportunities, Career/Technical Education, Alternative Schooling (P.A.C.E.)
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - 80% of students will be at or above grade level as measured by district curriculum assessments and MAAP.

Mentoring Model

- District Purpose or Goal
 - Using the Mentoring Model, Twenty-three counselors and social emotional therapists in grades K-12 and four family school coordinators will serve as mentors. Mentors must be:
 - Persistent
 - Believe that all children have abilities
 - Be willing to work closely with families using a “non-blaming approach”
 - Advocate for the student
 - Committed to documenting the intervention
 - Able to work well in different settings
 - Each mentor must establish trust with the students and their families, sometimes becoming their lifeline and navigator through the school system. The mentor regularly checks on students attendance and academic performance, talks to the families and listens to students, checking and connecting throughout the year.
 - The mentor checks on student engagement periodically using several indicators that include attendance, social/behavior performance, and academic performance. Using these indicators, the monitor can then “connect” using either basic or intensive interventions. All students receive basic interventions, which are primarily comprised of purposeful conversations with monitors once a month for secondary students and once a week for elementary students. The monitor talks to the student about their progress in school and its connection to graduation, possible conflicts or concerns and their resolution, and strengthens student coping skills.
 - An intensive intervention is triggered by a student exhibiting early warning signs of dropping out of school (e.g., attendance, academic performance, behavior). The monitor taps existing support services when needed and appropriate and increases the degree of interaction with the student, including calling the student and parent in the morning to make sure the student gets out bed and gets to school.

- Who Is Involved?
 - Mentors for grades 6-12, Family School Coordinators, SEL Therapists
 - Principals, Teachers, Parents, Graduation Coach
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - Mentoring/Tutoring
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - 95% students in grades 9-12 will pass the subject area tests.
 - Students will attend school regularly and participate in extra-curricular and curricular activities.

Academic Success Goal

Student Learning

- District Purpose of Goal
 - Assist all students in passing the state subject-area exams.
- Who Is Involved?
 - District Administrators
 - Building Administrators
 - Counselors
 - Career Coaches
 - Teachers
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - Using common test to identify students who are functioning below grade level, students will be offered placement in subject-area preparations classes.
 - Teachers who have received training in curriculum adaptation, classroom management, and special instructional strategies will teach these classes.
 - THS students will have the opportunity for dual enrollment and Middle College with a partnership with ICC and Delta State University.
 - Courses consist of integrated assessments; including exemptive pretests that allow learners to forgo content they have already mastered and focus on the concepts that need additional work.
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - 95% of students in grades 9-12 will pass or be proficient on the subject-area tests.

Professional Learning Systems

- District Purpose or Goal:
 - Provide teachers with research-based, ongoing professional development tied to the needs of the students.
 - Develop professional learning communities to allow teachers regular opportunities to meet in subject-area grade-level and interdisciplinary teams.
 - Provide principals and district administrators professional training and support in instructional coaching, dropout prevention strategies, and identifying and meeting the needs of special populations.

- Provide opportunities for teachers to work with academic coaches as the coaches
 - Model new strategies
 - Observe teachers regularly
 - Provide teaches feedback and support in the delivery of instruction
 - Increase professional dialogue among staff
 - Build professional learning communities
 - Train instructional and support staff in the following areas:
 - Curriculum Adaptation
 - Depth of Knowledge
 - Framework for Understanding Poverty
 - Working with Discipline
 - Study Skills
 - Adult Reading and Basic Education
 - Academic and Behavior Interventions
 - Utilizing Data to Inform Instructional Decisions
 - Transforming School Counseling
 - Reading to Learn
 - Positive Behavior Supports
 - Teaching Content to EL Students
- Who is Involved?
 - Professional Development Trainers, Principals, Counselors, Academic Coaches, All instructional staff
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - Professional Development
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - 60% of TPSD grades 3-8 will score Proficient or Advances on assessments required by the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAAP).

Increase Graduation Rate

- District Purpose of Goal
 - Increase Graduation Rate to 90%, Decrease Dropout Rate to < 5%
 - Reduce chronic absenteeism rate to 20%, ensure school connectedness
- Who is Involved?
 - District Administrators
 - Building Administrators
 - Counselors
 - Career Coaches
 - Teachers
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - The data collected and review of the research indicated that students need to be engaged at school to prevent truancy and dropping out. Students at risk show a lack of commitment to school, low self-esteem and experience greater feelings or rejection or criticism.

- Disseminate supports and incentives/rewards for good attendance, and develop consequences for poor attendance.
- Reduce teacher absenteeism rate
- Increase MTSS monitoring of performance interventions
- Ensure Professional Development focuses on
 - Instructional strategies
 - Classroom management
 - PBIS
 - Special Populations
 - Ensure a safe and healthy educational environment
 - Promote community knowledge of, involvement in, and support for the TPSD pursuit of excellence.
 - Implement and sustain comprehensive programs that address the needs of all students.
 - Support quality teaching that inspires students to achieve at their highest potential
 - Recommendations for future needs assessments
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - Increase Graduation Rate to 90%, Decrease Dropout Rate to < 5%

Positive Behavior Supports

- District Purpose or Goal
 - Develop an infrastructure of positive behavior supports.
 - Increase consistency among community, staff, and students regarding behavior expectations, rules, consequences, and rewards.
 - Increase attendance through incentives and behavior supports.
 - Foster respectful relationships among youth and adults.
 - Develop school cultures that are caring and have common rules and expectations that are positively reinforced.
 - Build communication lines with families and the community.
 - Implement strategies that promote academic success, decrease inappropriate behavior, and increase student engagement.
 - Develop and implement a Tier I behavior curriculum pre-K-12.
 - Implement proven researched based Tier II and Tier III behavior interventions.
- Who Is Involved?
 - District PBIS, School-Based Teams, All Employees, Parents
 - Students PreK-12
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - Safe Learning Environment
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - The number of students referred for disciplinary action will be reduced by half as reported by SAM.
 - Students will be rewarded and/or acknowledged for appropriate behavior.

- Students will receive needed and timely interventions to support positive behavior in school.

Personalized Educational Planning

- District Purpose or Goal
 - Develop comprehensive TPSD curriculum assessments for all grade levels and subject areas.
 - Develop benchmark assessments designed to determine level of mastery and monitor progress.
 - Design personalized curriculum for at-risk students utilizing data from aptitude testing, benchmark assessments, curriculum assessments, and Career Inventories.
 - Use assessment data to design personal education plans for every at-risk student:
 - EL
 - Dyslexia
 - Low-achieving (one or more years behind)
- Who is Involved?
 - Assistant Superintendent
 - Director of Student Assessment
 - Curriculum Team
 - Assessment Team
 - Principals
 - Teachers
 - Counselors
 - Parents
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - Individualized Instruction
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - 95% of students will be promoted annually. Increase graduation rate to 90%.

Recovery Initiatives

EdOptions Academy and Edmentum

- District Purpose of Goal
 - To deliver rigorous, researched-based, and pedagogically sound curriculum
- Who is Involved?
 - District Administrators
 - Secondary Administrators
 - Alternative School Administrator
 - Counselors
- Dropout Prevention Addressed
 - EdOptions Academy and Edmentum will partner with the district to deliver rigorous, researched-based, and pedagogically sound curriculum.
 - EdOptions Academy provides extensive and effective learning solutions to IEP students.

- The fully accredited virtual school solution allows our district to enhance, expand and extend our program offerings.
- Edmentum provides courses in a wide range of core subjects, electives, world languages, honors, and Advanced Placement offerings.
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - Students can obtain a high school diploma through EdOptions who cannot meet the requirements for the traditional high school diploma.

PACE Program

- District Purpose or Goal
 - To meet the academic needs of Milam Elementary, Tupelo Middle School (TMS), THS students who are two or more years behind their peers.
- Who is Involved?
 - District Administrators
 - Building Administrators
 - Counselors
 - Alternative School Administrator
- Dropout Prevention Strategy Addressed
 - Positive Alternatives for Continuing Education (PACE) was developed as an alternative learning program geared to meet the academic needs of Milam, Tupelo Middle School (TMS), & THS students who are two or more years behind their peers.
 - Edmentum, a digital curriculum, which provides blended and virtual learning, will be utilized to meet the district learning needs of students.
 - The aim of PACE is to offer relevant courses/credits to help students transition to Tupelo Middle School from Milam upon completion of all assignments and Tupelo High School from Tupelo Middle School at the end of the school year.
 - A certified teacher who has specialized skills in reaching at-risk students will research-based instructional methods and best practices to meet learning needs.
 - Additionally, wrap around services (individual/group counseling, tutoring, motivational speakers, short-term and long-term rewards, etc.) will be utilized to inspire students to achieve individual and class learning goals.
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - The aim of PACE is to offer relevant courses/credits to help students transition to Tupelo Middle School from Milam upon completion of all assignments and Tupelo High School from Tupelo Middle School after first semester or at the end of the school year.

Transition from Juvenile Detention Centers

- District Purpose or Goal
 - Assist students to successfully return to their home school following placement at the Juvenile Detention Center.
- Who is Involved?
 - District Administrators
 - Secondary Administrators
 - Alternative School Principal
 - Counselors
- Dropout Prevention Addressed
 - Students will report to the Alternative School for the specified time (See Policy).
 - Meet with counselors to determine a plan to return to Tupelo High School.
 - The students will be provided wrap around services to help them transition back unto the general academic environment.
- Expected Outcomes for Students
 - Students successfully return to their home school following a placement at the Juvenile Detention Center.