

Hattiesburg Public Schools

Dropout Prevention Plan

Hattiesburg High School Restructuring Plan

N. R. Burger Middle School Dropout Prevention Action Plan

2025-2026



“Built for Greatness”

Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention Plan 2025-2026 Table of Contents

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Hattiesburg Public Schools
2025-2026 Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan Assurances


On behalf of Hattiesburg Public Schools, I hereby submit the 2025-2026 Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan to provide goals, activities, and services necessary to meet the overarching goals of the state dropout prevention plan:

- Reducing the retention rates in grades kindergarten, first and second.
- Targeting subgroups that need additional assistance to meet graduation requirements.
- Developing dropout recovery initiatives that focus on students age seventeen (17) through twenty-one (21), who dropped out of school (i.e., Mississippi Works).
- Addressing how students will transition to the home school district from the juvenile detention centers.

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.

District Superintendent: Dr. Robert Williams  7/15/2025
Signature Date

School Board Chair: Dr. Delores McNair  7/15/2025
Signature Date

Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan Mandates and Purpose

Dropout Prevention Mandates

[Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated § 37-13-80](#): In accordance with state law Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-80, each school district shall implement an annual dropout prevention plan. The plan must be board approved and posted on the district website homepage by August 1st of each school year. Each high school with a graduation rate below 85% is required to develop a graduation restructuring plan. Representatives from the feeder middle schools should be included in the restructuring planning team.

[Hattiesburg Public Schools Board Policy JQH - Dropout Prevention](#): Hattiesburg Public Schools (HPS) Board of Trustees Policy **JQH (Dropout-Prevention)** outlines that the school board directs the superintendent to develop and implement an annual Dropout Prevention Plan and make the diligent efforts to reduce and eliminate dropouts in the district. In policy JQH, the school board directs the superintendent to provide reports on efforts made to maintain and increase student graduation in adherence to policy, state law, and state strategic plan for school districts and high schools to maintain a graduation rate of 85% or higher.

[Mississippi Department of Education Dropout Prevention Guidance](#) The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) adopted a Strategic Plan 2018-2022 that included *Goal 2 - Every student graduates from high school and is ready for college and career*. School districts are directed by [MDE guidelines](#) for dropout prevention plans that are designed to aid in the success of all students:

1. Submit information and reports as requested by the Mississippi Department of Education and provide regular and annual statistical reports on efforts made to decrease student retention.
2. Maintain accurate records documenting enrollment, attendance, graduation and dropout rates to report to the Mississippi Department of Education.
3. Take into account relevant, scientifically based research, strategies and best practices indicating services most effective in preventing dropouts, even in the earliest grades.
4. Use scientifically based research, best practices and all laws in determining the strategies to reduce the dropout rate of students with disabilities under IDEA.
5. Review the district dropout prevention and restructuring plan and action steps on an annual basis to determine appropriate changes needed to impact student success.

Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan is to guide the successful implementation of effective interventions and strategies for increasing graduation rate and decreasing the number of student dropouts.

Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan Team

Name	Position		Name	Position
Dr. Robert Williams	Superintendent		Dr. Charish Pierce	Career & Technical Education Counselor
Dr. Michael Battle	Assistant Superintendent		Kasia Craft	Hattiesburg High School Counselor
Dr. Tonsa Vaughn	Assistant Superintendent		Alysha Johnson	Hattiesburg 6th Grade STEAM Academy School Counselor
James Grubbs	Hattiesburg High School Principal		Joanne Allen	Hattiesburg High School Counselor
Jermaine Brown	Director of Student Activities & Athletics		Dexter Jordan	Student Services Support Coordinator
Carol Jones	N. R. Burger Middle School Principal		Dr. Teresa Poole	Dean of Education William Carey University Community Representative
Dr. Della Watson	Lillie Burney Learning Center Alternative Education Forrest County Juvenile Detention Center Administrator		Dr. Anna Wan	Professor University of Southern Mississippi Community Member
Dr. Tekeica Chapman	Hattiesburg 6th Grade STEAM Academy Principal		Dr. Jana Causey	Professor Pearl River County Community College/Dual Enrollment Community Representative
Dr. LaShonda Short	Director of Exceptional Education/Health Services		Derrick Autumn	Pinebelt Mental Health Services Council Agency Representative
<p>Team Rationale: Each team member brings background knowledge and expertise from his/her perspective field from inside and outside of a K-12 school setting; working collaboratively this team will support the district and high school's graduation/dropout efforts to foster success for all students.</p>				

Hattiesburg Public Schools Philosophy

The **vision** of Hattiesburg Public Schools is to create a **model teaching and learning environment** that graduates every student prepared for success in life, college, and the workforce.

The **mission** of Hattiesburg Public Schools is **to educate all students** to become productive citizens of a dynamic, global community.

The **core values and beliefs** of Hattiesburg Public Schools are foundational commitments.

1. **Student Focused** - We believe students are the central focus of all District activities and can achieve at high levels.
2. **Student Growth and Development** - We believe every adult plays a vital role in our students' growth and development.
3. **Strategic** - We believe in strategically allocating resources to educate students in high-quality learning environments.
4. **Equity** - We believe in providing students a wide range of academic and extracurricular opportunities and experiences.
5. **Leadership** - We believe everyone is a leader.
6. **Community** - We believe the community plays an essential role in the District's success.

The 2021-2025 strategic **goals** of Hattiesburg Public Schools focus on key targets of success.

1. **Academic Success:** Every student is proficient and showing growth in all assessed areas.
2. **Effective and Committed Staff:** Every classroom and department is led by caring, supportive, and highly effective staff.
3. **Positive School Climate and Culture:** All schools are safe, supportive, and welcoming.
4. **Family and Community Engagement:** All families and the community are informed, connected, and contribute to the success of our students and schools.
5. **Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainable Resources:** All District resources support the full implementation of the strategic plan



Strong ■ Leaders ■ Resilient ■ Persistent ■ Unified

Hattiesburg Public Schools Organizational Background

Hattiesburg Public Schools (HPS) is located in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The district houses PreK-12 students in five elementary schools (*PreK-5*), one 6th grade academy, one middle school (7-8), one high school (9-12), and an alternative school. Hattiesburg Public Schools partners with the Hattiesburg community to help our students achieve greater success in school and in life. As a student-focused district, Hattiesburg Public Schools pursues a goal of increasing college and career readiness as we prepare our students to enroll in a postsecondary institute of their choice, enlist in a branch of the armed services, and become gainfully employed in a career of their choice. The importance of student success graduation and beyond is emphasized as an area of continuity throughout the district. HPS offers instructional opportunities to meet diverse learner needs, including Advanced Placement Courses, Career-Technical Education, Dual-Enrollment and Middle College enrollment in local universities and community colleges. HPS is home to nationally recognized middle and high school Forensic and Debate teams, JROTC programs,, and award-winning orchestra and band programs. HPS students actively participate in a diverse offering of extra-curricular and athletic programs.

The district's 7-8 grade middle school **N. R. Burger (NRB)** follows the “team” approach in educating nearly 600 students. This approach allows teachers to closely follow students’ academic and individual progress. Students identify with the team and develop a sense of belonging. In order to get a “head start” in earning Carnegie Units for graduation, NRB offers credits in the following: 8th Math, Mississippi Studies, World Geography, Career Explorations I and II, Cyber Foundations I and II, and STEM. To increase student achievement and social responsibility through the use of digital tools, NRB embraces the Digital Learning Initiative, with technology integration, differentiation, and engagement. Additionally, **Hattiesburg STEAM Academy** serves as a middle school, secondary level transitional steppingstone for students in grade 6 from the elementary PreK-5 setting, as it introduces students to the “team” approach to learning from multiple teachers across disciplines with career and technical education course and multiple elective options added, i.e. ICT II, dance, strings, art, etc.

The district's **Hattiesburg High (HHS)** serves nearly 900 students in grades 9-12. HHS leaders are committed to the mission of educating all students through robust, challenging, and innovative learning experiences. In addition to the Mississippi Department of Education core courses, Hattiesburg High offers, through partnerships, student enrollment at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM), William Carey University, or Pearl River Community College (PRCC). In fact, HHS and PRCC provide a Middle College enrollment opportunity for students to graduate with an associate's degree while simultaneously graduating with a high school diploma. HHS extracurricular and athletic programs have received honors, i.e., multiple MHSAA and NFL Speech and Debate Championships (MHSAA, NFL), multi-year National Beta Club Schools and District of Distinction, and election to the MHSAA Scholar-Athlete Teams.

Guidance from the Mississippi College and Career Readiness (MSCCR) Design Principles and the Mississippi Department of Education Early Warning System (EWS) with Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

The district motto of Hattiesburg Public Schools is *Built for Greatness*. Each day Hattiesburg Public Schools works to graduate every student prepared for college, career, and life. In accordance with *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-80*, Hattiesburg Public Schools Board of Trustees Policy *JQH (Dropout-Prevention)*, and Mississippi State Board of Education policy Part 3, Chapter 41, Rule 41.1, the Hattiesburg Public School District Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan was developed with guidance from the Mississippi CCR Design Principles and the Mississippi Early Warning System (EWS) and Mississippi Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) in order to ensure that response plans to student applicable data, interventions, and actions are systematic, research-based, and effective.

The listed six design principles from the **Mississippi College and Career Readiness (CCR) Design Principles** guide day-to-day instruction and operations described in the Hattiesburg Public Schools District-wide Dropout Prevention Restructuring Plan inclusive of district-wide support of action plans specifically outlined from Hattiesburg High School.

1. **Ready for College and Career:** Our schools maintain the understanding that school exists to prepare all students for college and work. We maintain high standards for every student to overcome the harmful consequences of tracking and sorting.
2. **Require Powerful Teaching and Learning:** Teachers design rigorous instruction that ensures the development of critical thinking, application, and problem-solving skills.
3. **Personalization:** Schools understand that knowing students well is an essential condition of helping them achieve academically.
4. **Redefine Professionalism:** Collaborative work orientation of staff, shared responsibility for decision-making, and the commitment to growing the capacity of the staff is evident in all schools.
5. **Leadership:** Work to develop a shared mission for the school and work actively as agents of change, sharing leadership [for improved student outcomes in a culture of high expectations for all students.
6. **Purposeful Design:** Schools are designed to create the conditions that ensure the other five design principles. The organization of time, space, and the allocation of resources ensure that these best practices become common practice.

Additionally, the **Mississippi Department of Education Early Warning System (EWS)** key focus areas are utilized to guide Hattiesburg Public Schools in developing a dropout prevention and restructuring plan designed to graduate every student college and career ready. The MDE Early Warning System (EWS) assists in efforts to support students and help them exit well-prepared for college and/or careers. The EWS serves to identify students in need of assistance early and pinpoints the suitable interventions that are individualized for areas of attendance, behavior, and/or course performance to assist each student with successfully exiting high school ready for college and career. The EWS indicators of attendance, behavior and course performance are the data points used most frequently in predicting the student graduation from high school.

1. **Attendance** - Absences, tardies, and early check-outs cause students to fall behind in their coursework, resulting in falling grades. Poor attendance may indicate health, family, or other issues that are distracting the student.
2. **Behavior** - Misbehavior can indicate that a student is disengaged with the school environment, challenging school personnel to create ways to reignite interest in school for the student. Outside influences such as homelessness, working jobs, abuse or neglect in the home, drug abuse, mental health issues, and bullying should be considered when determining causal factors for behavioral issues. Suspensions can make it difficult for a student to catch up on material missed.
3. **Course performance** - Course failure and overall grade point average correlate with student's probability of graduating from high school on time. Disengagement at the classroom level can be indicated through poor course performance. Consider methods for improving teacher effectiveness when addressing engagement issues.

Compiling, analyzing, and responding to data derived from monitoring and reviewing the EWS indicators is used to design effective interventions for students at-risk using the **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** in accordance with Mississippi State Board of Education policy Part 3, Chapter 41, Rule 41.1. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) implements a three-tier instructional model to address student learning through instruction and intervention.

1. **Tier 1** – focuses on all students and involves the implementation of evidence-based curriculum and instructional practices that align with state standards and include differentiated instruction.
2. **Tier 2** – focuses on students identified as at-risk, providing them with targeted supplemental instruction delivered in small groups.
3. **Tier 3** – focuses on struggling students who have already moved through tier 1 and 2 assistance and now require intensive, supplemental instructional support delivered in small groups or individually.

Hattiesburg Public Schools Four-Year Cohort Graduation and Dropout Data 2014-2024

The 2025-2026 Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Team used multiple state of Mississippi data sets and reports as well as internal district data sources to review, analyze, and determine appropriate action steps needed for student success in order to increase four-year graduation rates and decrease dropout rates. The Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention - Restructuring Team reviewed multiple applicable data sets to drive the development of an effective plan: attendance data, discipline data, and course performance data, and the state MDE published reports of Chronic Absenteeism, Literacy-Based Promotion Act, and the Mississippi Succeed Annual Report Cards. However, the listed Hattiesburg and the state of Mississippi's comparative 2014-2024 four-year graduation and dropout rates data was most influential in the planning and analysis.

HATTIESBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS (HPS) AND STATE OF MISSISSIPPI (MS) COMPARISON DATA																					
FOUR-YEAR COHORT GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES 2014 - 2024																					
ALL STUDENTS 4-YEAR GRADUATION RATES																					
2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS
72.3%	75.5%	69.5%	78.4%	76.1%	80.8%	72.9%	82.3%	70.4%	83.3%	71.6%	84%	79.3%	85%	83.1%	87.7%	89.7%	88.4%	94.8%	88.9%	96.1%	89.4%
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES 4-YEAR GRADUATION RATES																					
2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS
36.4%	—	28.2%	27.5%	49.3%	33.6%	29.1%	34.7%	21.6%	36.4%	20%	38.4%	45%	42.2%	51.4%	55.4%	53.6%	59.9%	3%	67.1%	96.9%	70%
ALL STUDENTS DROPOUT RATES																					
2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS	HPS	MS
17.1%	13.9%	14.1%	12.8%	12.2%	11.8%	16.2%	10.8%	17%	10.6%	18%	10.1%	14.3%	9.7%	12.5%	8.8%	7%	8.5%	77.5%	9%	3.9%	8.5%

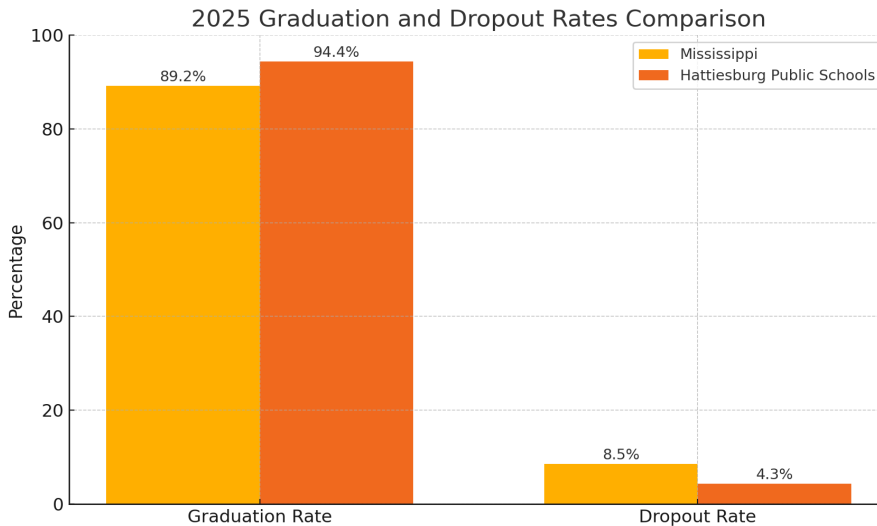
Hattiesburg Public Schools 2025 Graduation and Dropout Data Profile

Hattiesburg Public Schools continues to demonstrate strong performance in high school completion outcomes compared to the state average. The following profile summarizes the district’s 2025 graduation and dropout rates, highlighting positive trends and opportunities for continued improvement.

Key Data Points

- Hattiesburg Public Schools 2025 Graduation Rate: 94.4%
- Mississippi State Average Graduation Rate: 89.2%
- Hattiesburg Public Schools 2025 Dropout Rate: 4.3%
- Mississippi State Average Dropout Rate: 8.5%

The chart below compares Hattiesburg Public Schools to the statewide averages for 2025.



Summary of Key Outcomes

Hattiesburg Public Schools exceeds the state average graduation rate by over 5 percentage points and maintains a dropout rate nearly half of the state average. These outcomes reflect the district’s ongoing commitment to dropout prevention strategies, student supports, and alternative pathways.

Next Steps

As the district moves forward into 2025–2026, continued emphasis on transition support, credit recovery, and expanded re-engagement programs will help sustain high graduation rates and further reduce dropouts. Monitoring subgroup data and refining interventions based on Early Warning System indicators will remain a priority to close any remaining gaps.

Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention and Graduation Success Strategies

Hattiesburg Public Schools strives to increase student achievement for **all** students; and the district's focus on graduation and dropout data, root causes, research, interventions, and strategies includes a systematic design and implementation approach, in accordance with federal and state law, consisting of the strategies and actions outlined below addressing **four key areas for dropout prevention and graduation success**.

1. Reducing the retention rates in grades kindergarten, first, and second.

- Early Childhood Parent Educator focusing on early literacy skills for preschool students.
- HPS and Head Start Pre-K programs at each elementary site to increase kindergarten readiness skills.
- Utilization of the services of HPS Early Childhood Center and continue to provide training for area child care providers
- Establishment of Hattiesburg Early Learning Collaborative to work with private and public childcare centers for the education of 4 years olds/PreK students and teachers.
- School-site Interventionists for students not meeting grade-level standards
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Response to Intervention (RTI) Three-Tier Process for Academics and Behavior
- Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) training and implementation
- Progress Monitoring: i-Ready Standards Mastery/Common Assessments, Accelerated Reader/ Star Assessment, Measurement of Academic Progress
- Extended Year Summer Enrichment and Remediation Opportunities.
- District Reading, Literacy K-3, Mathematics, English Language Arts, and Science Curriculum Specialists
- Self-Directed Improvement System (SDIS) and data review and response systems to drive strategies for achieving proficiency

2. Targeting subgroups that need additional assistance with graduation requirements.

- Individual Student Success Plans/Career Academic Plans (ISP) are used to determine graduation pathway options (Traditional, Alternate, MDE Approved Diploma Endorsements-Career and Technical, Distinguished, etc).
- Alternate Diploma Options for students with disabilities-severe cognitively delayed (SCD)
- Inclusion and coteaching model support in all core academic areas for students with disabilities
- Transition and job coaching/career development support for students with disabilities
- Teachers of students with disabilities/inclusion/special education teachers monitoring student with disabilities academic and behavioral data and providing at following terms and academic assessments - deep data dives and intervention support updates on their specific students (SDIS-data, review, response, and support)
- Hattiesburg 6th grade STEAM Academy to address academic, social, and emotional gaps from elementary to secondary grades

- Multi-tier Systems of Support/Response to Intervention (RTI) Process for Academics and Behavior with a 30-45 minutes minimum intervention block for students on Tiers II and III
- Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) for Early Warning Systems (EWS) targeted groups of students
- Compensatory/Remedial/Remediation Reading, Writing and Mathematics courses
- Focus on scaffolding instruction for all students
- Alternative Education (*overage and safety net academic student programming, online courses, and alternative paths to graduation*)
- Credit Recovery/Summer School/Alternative Diploma Options
- Jobs for Mississippi Graduates (middle school and high school programs)
- SEMRHI (Clinic, Village Connections Teen Parent, Health Education)
- Mental and emotional counseling support outreach partnerships (Pinebelt, etc.)

3. Developing dropout recovery initiatives that focus on students age seventeen (17) through twenty-one (21), who dropped out of school.

- Tutoring opportunities for re-testers for Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) in English, Biology, US History, and Algebra I.
- Career and Technical Education Supports - teachers, courses/programs, director, and counselor (grades 6-12)
- Implement P-16 Family and Community Councils at each school site to seek community outreach avenues of support
- Credit Recovery, Summer School, Grade Results Alternative Diploma Options, and/or Families First Partnership as applicable
- Expand Flexible Scheduling and Multiple Pathways: Offer class instructional mode options, hybrid or online learning models, and open-entry/open-exit pathways for older youth balancing work, family, or life barriers. Flexibility keeps older youth enrolled.
- Advance and Grow Bridge Programs to Workforce or Postsecondary: Create linkages to workforce credentials, community college dual enrollment, graduation-to-college bridge programs, or adult basic education with wraparound supports. Older students are more likely to stay in school or to return if pathways feel meaningful and connect directly to employment or college.

4. Addressing how students will transition to the home school district from the juvenile detention centers.

- Neglected and Delinquent Grant (federal funding for Transition Liaison, Health, and Art)
- Delinquent Funds from Title I utilized to employ support staff Delinquent tutor and Transitional tutor for students in at-risk groups - juvenile detention center, behavior/transition needs, character education, healthy living-mind, body, soul work through art, etc.
- Student Progress Reports from homeschool sites and parents (academic progress communication with parent/guardians)
- Licensed school counselor at the alternative school site

- MDE Required extended school days/months/school year with a General Education and Special Education teacher at Juvenile Detention Center as well as a district-funded Case Manager
- Individual Transition Plan (ITP): Require every student leaving the juvenile center to have a written Individual Transition Plan developed collaboratively with the center's team, the district case manager, the student, the family, and the receiving home school. The plan should outline: Current academic standing; Credit status and recovery plan; Behavior and counseling supports needed; Contact person at the home school; and Schedule for check-ins during first 30–60–90 days back.
- Expand Partnership Supports: Build or strengthen MOUs with local mental health providers, youth mentors, or community organizations to support students with counseling, character education, art therapy, or job readiness while they transition back.
- Strengthen Family Re-entry Meetings: Before the student returns, hold a mandatory family transition conference (in-person or virtual) to explain expectations, supports, and roles — and provide resources for community counseling, mentoring, and behavior supports.

Description of Additional Research-Based Strategies for Dropout Prevention and Graduation

- 1. Mentoring:** Mentoring is a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust. Guidance from counselors, interventionists, behavior specialists, and administrators.
- 2. Tutoring:** Tutoring, also a one-to-one activity focuses on academics and is an effective way to address specific needs such as reading, writing, or math competencies.
- 3. 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.
- 4. Early Interventions/Early Childhood Education:** Birth-to-three interventions demonstrate that providing a child with educational enrichment can modify IQ. Early interventions to help low-achieving students recognize that focusing on reading and writing skills are fundamental for effective learning in all subjects. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their school experience. HPS early childhood existing programs and supports include: Child Find, Collaboration with Head Start and the Early Learning Collaborative Grant.
- 5. Family and Community Engagement:** Research consistently finds that family involvement has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school. HPS existing programs and supports for parent and family engagement include: Family/Community P-16 Council at each school site with quarterly meetings, Superintendent's Parent Advisory Board, Parent Teacher Conferences, Parent Informational Meetings, Parent, Teacher, and Student Organizations for each site, regular and a variety of communication to parents via newsletters, community outreach meetings, and social media.
- 6. Career and Technical Education:** A quality guidance program is essential for all students. School-to-work programs recognize that youth need specific skills to prepare them for the larger demands of today's workplace. HPS existing programs and supports: Career and Technical Education gives students the chance to get a head start on preparing for college and careers. In CTE programs, students will learn how core school subjects like math, science, and writing are used in real life. CTE students have the opportunity to participate in hands-on training in their chosen program and gain real-world experience. Many programs offer the opportunity to earn nationally recognized certifications which can be used to get a job that will help them pay for college or start their careers right out of high school. CTE instruction begins directly in the 6th grade. Career-related counseling begins in Kindergarten. CTE Career Pathway programs are aligned with the area workforce demands. Partnerships exist with the Area Development Partnership and Pearl River Community College
- 7. Safe Schools Initiatives and Efforts:** A comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution, must deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. Violence prevention means providing daily experiences at all grade levels that enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills in all students. HPS existing programs and supports: CPI Training for staff, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), School Behavior Counselors, and Superintendent Student Advisory Program.

8. **Alternative Schooling:** Alternative schooling provides potential dropouts a variety of options that can lead to graduation, with programs paying special attention to the students' individual social needs and the academic requirements for a high school diploma. Hattiesburg Public Schools current Alternative Programming Opportunities that may include the following:

- **High School Safety Net Program:** The Safety Net program is designed to intervene and support students, primarily seniors, who would otherwise drop out because of the restrictive time confines within the traditional school's all-day program. This alternative learning option provides a flexible and tailored schedule based on the student's individual needs to enable him/her to earn any remaining high school credits with allowances in flexibility for school-day hours while providing the safety net support of counseling and instructional staff.
- **Alternative Learning Options with Flexible Diploma Routes:** Through a dropout prevention online learning program, students are provided with an alternative route option to obtain a high school diploma. This option is made available to students to earn a high school diploma through an educational program outside of Hattiesburg Public Schools but with the support of on-site alternative school staff-teachers and counselors available to assist the students and families.
- **Behavior Modification:** Behavior Modification is designed for students kindergarten through fifth grade to help address both at-risk behavior and academic students via a small, structured environment in which the improvement of inappropriate emotional and social behaviors are focused areas of intervention support.

Sources: Suggestions in the Mississippi Dropout Prevention State Guidance Document, Robert Marzano's Schools That Work Research, The Clearinghouse What Works -Research on Dropout Prevention, the Resources of Mississippi Works, [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-80](#), Hattiesburg Public Schools Board of Trustees Policy [JOH \(Dropout-Prevention\)](#), and Mississippi State Board of Education policy Part 3, Chapter 41, Rule 41.1.

Hattiesburg High School Restructuring Plan Overview Goals, Strategies, Supports, Monitoring, and Evaluation

The Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention and **Hattiesburg High School Restructuring Plan** provides goals, activities, and services necessary to meet the three overarching goals of the **Mississippi Department of Education’s State Dropout Prevention and Graduation Plan**: (1) Increase the state graduation rate to 85%; (2) Reduce the state dropout rate by 50%; and (3) Reduce the truancy rate by 60%.

Moreover, Goal 1 of the Hattiesburg Public Schools Strategic Plan is to increase the academic success of all students, which encompasses increasing student graduation rates and decreasing student dropout rates. In turn, the primary goal of **Hattiesburg High School’s 2025-2026 Restructuring Plan** has a parallel purpose of increasing success for all students with a laser focus on dropout prevention and graduation increase.

In accordance with [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-80](#), Hattiesburg Public Schools Board of Trustees Policy [JQH \(Dropout-Prevention\)](#), and Mississippi State Board of Education policy Part 3, Chapter 41, Rule 41.1, Hattiesburg Public Schools and **Hattiesburg High School’s 2025-2026 Restructuring Plan** is outlined into three goals tied to data sets and applicable information areas that are required collections through the Mississippi Department of Education Early Warning System (EWS).

HATTIESBURG HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING PLAN OVERVIEW	
GOAL 1: COURSE PERFORMANCE	<p>GOAL 1: Course Performance Target: Reduce course failures in grades 9–12 by 5% or more by May 2026.</p>
	<p>Focus Areas: Expand targeted interventions, enhance tutoring and credit recovery options, increase parent communication, and strengthen early warning data use to identify struggling students earlier.</p>
GOAL 2: ATTENDANCE	<p>Target: Maintain an average daily attendance rate of 90% or higher by May 2026.</p>
	<p>Focus Areas: Monitor chronic absenteeism closely, implement family outreach strategies, provide attendance incentives, and engage community partners to address barriers to consistent attendance.</p>
GOAL 3: BEHAVIOR	<p>Target: Increase the percentage of students in grades 9–12 with two or fewer discipline referrals from 87% to 90% or higher by May 2026.</p>
	<p>Focus Areas: Strengthen Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), expand student mentoring programs, train staff on proactive behavior management, and increase student recognition for positive behaviors.</p>

Hattiesburg High School Restructuring Plan Overview Goals, Strategies, Supports, Monitoring, and Evaluation

PLAN TO PROGRESS MONITOR PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS AND EVALUATION

School and district teams will **regularly review** the District Dropout Prevention Plan and update site-based practices to support these goals.

Each year, **district and school administrators, school counselors, and community partners** will assess progress toward the outlined action steps, provide input, and recommend adjustments as needed.

Academic performance, attendance trends, discipline data, and climate survey results will be collected and reviewed throughout the year. The **High School Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Team**, in collaboration with district leadership, will analyze this data and make **informed recommendations** to keep Hattiesburg High School on track to meet its goals.

This process ensures that the plan remains **data-driven, responsive, and aligned** with district priorities, with clear annual updates reflecting progress and next steps.

Hattiesburg High School Restructuring Plan Overview
Goals, Strategies, Supports, Monitoring, and Evaluation

HATTIESBURG HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING PLAN GOAL 1 STRATEGIES					
Goal 1: Reduce course failures in grades 9-12 by 5% or more by May 2026.					
Focus Area: <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Performance <input type="checkbox"/> Other					
Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025 - May 2026	Promote College and Career Readiness Standards and instruction in all courses	Teacher Training on Standards PLC Lesson Study of Standards	Lesson Plans Scaffolding Documents/CCR Standards MS Teacher Growth Rubric PLC Meetings	Principal Assistant Principals Assistant Superintendent -Academics	Teachers Academic Coaches Interventionists Academic Dean PLC Chairs
August 2025 - May 2026	Provide innovative programs for non-traditional students	CTE Course Awareness Alternative School Program Awareness Career Meetings with Parents	Meeting Meetings Counselor Student College Plans/Meetings Career Center Sign-in Sheets Alternative School Planning Meetings	Principal Assistant Principal Alternative School Director CCR/CTE Director	Teachers Counselors Parents Career Center Facilitator Students Parents Administrators
August 2025 - May 2026	Promote college and career awareness focused activities.	Monitor list of 9 th grade students with individualized Student Success Plan (ISP) Provide list of state-approved graduation options Provide list of HPS course offerings Current list of CTE Pathways that meet Workforce Development demands Current Bureau of Statistic Report	All 8 th grade students will enter 9 th grade with an Individual Student Success Plan (ISP); Major Clarity Online Career Survey and Support Programs; Partnership with Get2College National Sign-in Sheets and Agendas from Events such as: FAFSA Day, College Signing Day, Parent College Information Night, Meetings with Workforce Partners	Principal Counselors CCR/CTE Director Assistant Principals Career Facilitator	Middle School and High School Principals Guidance Counselors Students Parents Teachers

HATTIESBURG HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING PLAN GOAL 1 STRATEGIES

Goal 1: Reduce course failures in grades 9-12 by 5% or more by May 2026.

Focus Area: Attendance Behavior Course Performance Other

Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025- May 2026	Prepare students at the 9th-grade level for the ins and outs of high school life and the transition and skills needed.	Implement Keystone at the Exploring Computer Science curriculum with supports for college, career, and the workforce at the 9th grade Academy	Maintain enrollment list of 9 th grade students Monitor Exploring Computer Science Curriculum and Standards Classroom observation Logs Teacher Evaluation	Guidance Counselors CTE Director High School Principal	Teachers with Exploring Computer Science course endorsement Parents Students Counselors
August 2025-May 2026	Evaluate and improve the use of and response to formative and summative assessments.	Additional training on assessments - formative and summative Additional training on small group and individualized instruction	Teacher lesson plans Teacher observations Increase student achievement Work samples	Academic Dean 6-12 Curriculum Director Principals Assistant Principals	Professional Development Coaching/ Trainers Teachers Administrators
August 2025-May 2026	Implement Multi-tier Systems of Supports with fidelity	Additional MTSS training MTSS Meeting Schedule	Agendas/Sign-in Sheets Improved Student Achievement Teacher Observations Teacher Grade Distributions Formative/ Summative Assessment Data	Assistant Principals Interventionists Principal Counselor District MTSS Coordinator	Students Parents MTSS Coordinator Teachers Counselors Administrators
August 2025- May 2026	Increase extended School Year and Credit Recovery Opportunities for ALL students.	Review regularly of IEPs and MTSS Tier III student plans, Additional professional development, funding for credit recovery programs and staff	Use of Edgenuity IEP Monitoring by CFCs and Director of Exceptional Ed Teacher Observations Student Achievement Increased	Director of Exceptional Ed and Exceptional Ed Teachers Assistant Superintendent-Academic HHS Principal Alternative Principal Counselors	Teachers Parents Students Administrators Counselors SPED Dept.

HATTIESBURG HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING PLAN GOAL 2 STRATEGIES

Goal 2: Maintain 90% or higher average daily attendance by May 2026.

Focus Area: Attendance Behavior Course Performance Other

Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025- May 2026	Ensure each grade and school-wide that there is a plan to monitor and address attendance.	Communication with parents ADA Reports Student Attendance Profiles EWS Tracking System/ Spreadsheet Data Management	School and District SARB Committees Parent Contact Reports School Newsletters School and District Reduction in absenteeism and truancy	Principal Assistant Principals Counselors Behavior Specialist Social Worker Coordinator Assistant Superintendent Academics	Teachers Academic Coaches Interventionists Academic Dean Counselors Parents Students MDE Attendance Officer
August 2025-May 2026	Improve and strengthen communication with counselors, parents, and students regarding graduation requirements.	Maintain individualized student course sheets. Print graduation requirements in the Code of Conduct. Counselor Meetings for grades 6-12 High School Counselors and Alternative School Counselors work Sessions once a month.	Maintain a log of individualized counseling sessions for students in 8 th -12 th . Maintain a log of 9-week term meetings with middle and high school counselors. Graduation progress report for all high school students. Ongoing parent meetings 9-12	Principals Guidance Counselors Academic Dean	Students Teachers Parents Interventionist Principals
August 2025 - May 2026	Strengthen interventions and a comprehensive school-wide PBIS plan that also includes attendance	Incentives Teacher training Attendance data Attendance intervention awareness and training	Implementation of research-based attendance interventions School-wide attendance focus Students with attendance issues showing improvement	Counselors Principal Assistant Principal	Teachers Students Parents Interventionists Community Partners for incentive support

HATTIESBURG HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING PLAN GOAL 3 STRATEGIES

Goal 3: Increase students in grades 9-12 with 2 referrals or less from 87% to 90% or higher by May 2026.

Focus Area: Attendance Behavior Course Performance Other

Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025 - May 2026	Improve identification of early warning signs for students at-risk.	District Common Assessments Behavior Screener Discipline Reports	MTSS/EWS Meeting Agendas and Minutes Spreadsheets for EWS Counselor Notes Behavior Specialist Notes	Principal Assistant Principals Behavior Interventionist	Teachers Academic Counselors Students Parents
August 2025- May 2026	Provide multiple levels of behavioral support for all students	Focus on intervention, goal of preventive measures MTSS/EWS strives to ensure practices, policies and programs are aligned on classroom, school and district levels	Data tracking Decreased behavior referrals from student body	Principal Assistant Principals Behavior Interventionist	Teachers Academic Counselors Students
August 2025 - May 2026	Focus on implementation of systematic PBIS with fidelity for students	Incentives Student behavior data Behavior Interventions Behavior Training Mentorship Program	Decreased number of office referrals Clear understanding of PBIS expectations by all students and staff	Counselors Principal Assistant Principals Behavior Specialists	Students Teachers Parents PBIS Committee
August 2025 - May 2026	Implement PBIS with fidelity and reinforce CKH Social Contracts and EXCEL models in all classrooms.	Incentives, behavior data dashboards, CKH training materials, mentorship program structure	Evidence of incentives delivered, classroom walkthroughs, reduced office referrals, staff & student feedback	Counselors Principal Assistant Principals Behavior Specialists	Students Teachers Parents PBIS Committee
August 2025 - May 2026	Provide tiered behavior interventions aligned with PBIS and Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) strategies to build positive relationships and classroom culture.	CKH program resources, behavior tracking tools, intervention frameworks, classroom management training	Decrease in referrals, documented CKH lesson integration, positive climate survey results	Counselors Principal Assistant Principals	Behavior Interventionist, Teachers, Academic Counselors, PBIS/CKH Team, Students

N.R. Burger Middle School Dropout Prevention Action Plan Overview

Goals, Strategies, Supports, Monitoring, and Evaluation

The Hattiesburg Public Schools Dropout Prevention and **N.R. Burger Middle School Dropout Prevention Action Plan** provide goals, activities, and services necessary to meet the three overarching goals of the **Mississippi Department of Education’s State Dropout Prevention and Graduation Plan**: (1) Increase the state graduation rate to 85%; (2) Reduce the state dropout rate by 50%; and (3) Reduce the truancy rate by 60%.

Moreover, Goal 1 of the Hattiesburg Public Schools Strategic Plan is to increase the academic success of all students, which encompasses increasing student graduation rates and decreasing student dropout rates. In turn, the primary goal of **N.R Burger Middle School’s 2025-2026 Dropout Prevention Action Plan** has a parallel purpose of increasing success for all students with a laser focus on dropout prevention and graduation increase.

In accordance with [Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-80](#), Hattiesburg Public Schools Board of Trustees Policy [JQH \(Dropout-Prevention\)](#), and a **middle school component** included as a part of the dropout prevention Mississippi State Board of Education policy Part 3, Chapter 41, Rule 41.1, N.R. Burger Middle School’s 2025-2026 Dropout Prevention Action Plan is outlined into three goals tied to data sets and applicable information areas that are required collections through the Mississippi Department of Education Early Warning System (EWS).

N.R. BURGER MIDDLE SCHOOL DROPOUT PREVENTION ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW	
GOAL 1: COURSE PERFORMANCE	<p>Target: Reduce course failures in grades 7-8 by 5% or more by May 2026.</p> <p>Focus Area: Strengthen academic interventions, small-group support, after-school tutoring, progress monitoring, and parent communication to address early signs of academic risk.</p>
GOAL 2: ATTENDANCE	<p>Target: Maintain 93% or higher average daily attendance by May 2026.</p> <p>Focus Area: Monitor chronic absenteeism, engage families early, provide attendance incentives, and work with community partners to remove barriers that impact consistent attendance.</p>
GOAL 3: BEHAVIOR	<p>Target: Increase students in grades 7-8 with 2 referrals or less from 87% to 90% or higher by May 2026.</p> <p>Focus Area: Implement PBIS and Capturing Kids’ Hearts strategies schoolwide, strengthen behavior supports and mentorship programs, and train staff to reinforce positive expectations and relationships.</p>

N.R. Burger Middle School Dropout Prevention Action Plan Overview

Goals, Strategies, Supports, Monitoring, and Evaluation

PLAN TO PROGRESS MONITOR PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS AND EVALUATION

School and district teams will **regularly review** the District Dropout Prevention Plan and refine site-based practices at N.R. Burger to align with districtwide goals.

Each year, **administrators, school counselors, and community partners** will assess progress toward action steps, provide input, and adjust strategies as needed.

Through the ongoing collection and analysis of **academic performance, attendance, discipline, and climate survey data**, district leaders, along with the **District, Hattiesburg High School, and N.R. Burger Middle School Dropout Prevention Teams**, will collaborate to ensure the middle school stays on track to meet its goals.

Regular updates and data checks will guide continuous improvement and help align site-based work with the district's overall dropout prevention efforts.

N.R. Burger Middle School Dropout Prevention Action Plan Overview

Goals, Strategies, Supports, Monitoring, and Evaluation

N.R. BURGER MIDDLE DROPOUT PREVENTION ACTION PLAN GOAL 1 STRATEGIES					
Goal 1: Reduce course failures in grades 7-8 by 5% or more by May 2026.					
Focus Area: <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Performance <input type="checkbox"/> Other					
Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025 - May 2026	Promote teacher best practice and research-based instructional strategies.	Teacher Training on Standards PLC Lesson Study of Standards Schedule and Develop PLC Agendas and Meeting times	Lesson Plans Scaffolding Documents/CCR Standards MS Teacher Growth Rubric PLC Meetings Outcomes will be measured through PLC observations Progress will be monitored with submitted minutes with evidence of collaboration and discussion of meeting student needs.	Principal Assistant Principals Assistant Superintendent Academic Directors	Teachers Academic Coaches Interventionist s PLC Chairs
August 2025 - May 2026	Increase student awareness of options beyond the classroom that their work in the classroom is preparing them for in the real world. Burger Middle School via the guidance department will plan and present a series of college and career mini-lessons (<i>minimum of 4</i>) to students. during the sessions.	Major Clarity Online Career Interest Program; individualized Student Success Plan (ISP) Provide a list of state-approved graduation options Current list of CTE Pathways that meet Workforce Development demands Current Bureau of Statistic Report	All 7-8 grade students will develop and follow an Individual Student Success Plan (ISP); Major Clarity Online Career Survey and Support Programs; Sign-in Sheets and Agendas from Events such as: Career Night, Informational Meetings, Meetings with Workforce Partners. Outcomes will be measured via surveys of the mini-session information completed by the students. Progress will be monitored via counselor lesson schedules, agendas, sign-in sheets, and student feedback	Administrator Counselors CTE Support Teachers	Administrators Counselors Students Parents Teachers

N.R. BURGER MIDDLE DROPOUT PREVENTION ACTION PLAN GOAL 1 STRATEGIES

Goal 1: Reduce course failures in grades 7-8 by 5% or more by May 2026.

Focus Area: Attendance Behavior **Course Performance** Other

Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025 - May 2026	Burger Middle School via the guidance department will plan and present a series of college and career mini-lessons (<i>minimum of 4</i>) to students. during the sessions.	Major Clarity Online Career Interest Program; individualized Student Success Plan (ISP) Provide a list of state-approved graduation options Current list of CTE Pathways	All 7-8 grade students will develop and follow an Individual Student Success Plan (ISP); Major Clarity Online Career Survey and Support Programs; Sign-in Sheets and Agendas from Events such as: P16 Career Night, Informational Meetings, Meetings with Workforce Partners	Administrator Counselors CTE Support Teachers	Administrators Counselors Students Parents Teachers
August 2025- May 2026	Evaluate and improve the use of and response to formative and summative assessments.	Additional training on assessments - formative and summative Additional training on small group and individualized instruction	Teacher lesson plans Teacher observations Increase student achievement Work samples	Academic Directors Coordinators Assistant Superintendent Principals Assistant Principals	Professional Development Coaching/ Trainers Teachers Administrators
August 2025-May 2026	Implement Multi-tier Systems of Supports (MTSS) and Early Warning Systems (EWS) with fidelity	Additional MTSS and EWS training MTSS Meeting Schedule	Agendas/Sign-in Sheets Improved Student Achievement Teacher Observations Teacher Grade Distributions Formative/ Summative Assessment Data	Assistant Principals Interventionists Principal Counselor District MTSS Coordinator Social Workers	MTSS Coordinator Teachers Students Parents Administrators
August 2025- May 2026	Increase extended School Year and Credit Recovery Opportunities for ALL students via Summer School Enrichment and/or Remediation for learning loss recovery.	Review regularly of IEPs and MTSS Tier III student plans, Additional professional development, funding for credit recovery programs and staff	Use of Edgenuity IEP Monitoring by LSCs and Director of Exceptional Ed Teacher Observations Student Achievement Increased	Director of Exceptional Ed and Exceptional Ed Teachers Assistant Superintendent Principal Counselors	Teachers Parents Students Administrators Counselors SPED Dept.

N. R. BURGER MIDDLE DROPOUT PREVENTION ACTION PLAN GOAL 2 STRATEGIES

Goal 2: Maintain 93% or higher average daily attendance by May 2026.

Focus Area: Attendance Behavior Course Performance Other

Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025- May 2026	Ensure each grade, pod/team, and school-wide that there is a plan to monitor and address attendance.	Communication with parents ADA Reports Student Attendance Profiles EWS Tracking System/ Spreadsheet Data Management	School and District SARB Committees Parent Contact Reports School Newsletters School and District Reduction in absenteeism and truancy	Principal Assistant Principals Counselors Behavior Specialist Social Worker Assistant Superintendent - Academics	Teachers Academic Coaches Interventionists Academic Dean Counselors Parents Students MDE Attendance Officer
August 2025- May 2026	Implement effectively and monitor with fidelity the Capturing Kids Hearts character education and SEL and leadership of self components for all students.	Counselors Meetings with Students Scheduled Lessons Teaching Capturing Kids Hearts Student and Teacher Print and Online Materials Student Leaders	Schedule of student-focused SEL events/activities Maintain a log of 9-week term meetings with students and counselors. Graduation progress report for all high school students. Ongoing parent and student meetings 7-8	Principals Guidance Counselors	Students Teachers Parents Interventionist Administrators
August 2025 - May 2026	Strengthen interventions for behavior and attendance through a comprehensive school-wide PBIS plan that also includes attendance	Incentives Teacher training Attendance data Attendance intervention awareness and training	Implementation of research-based attendance interventions School-wide attendance focus Students with attendance issues showing improvement	Counselors Principal Assistant Principal	Teachers Students Parents Interventionists Community Partners for incentive support Community Engagement Council

N.R. BURGER MIDDLE DROPOUT PREVENTION ACTION PLAN GOAL 3 STRATEGIES

Goal 3: Increase students in grades 7-8 with 2 referrals or less from 87% to 90% or higher by May 2026.

Focus Area: Attendance Behavior Course Performance Other

Timeline	Action Steps	Resources Needed/Source	Evidence of Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) Involved
August 2025 - May 2026	Improve identification of early warning signs for students at-risk and implementation of MTSS behavior components with fidelity.	District Common Assessments Behavior Screener Discipline Reports	MTSS/EWS Meeting Agendas and Minutes Spreadsheets for EWS Counselor Notes	Principal Assistant Principals Counselors	Teachers Academic Counselors Students Parents Social Workers
August 2025- May 2026	Provide multiple levels of behavioral support for all students	Focus on intervention, goal of preventive measures MTSS/EWS strives to ensure practices, policies and programs are aligned on classroom, school and district levels	Data tracking Decreased behavior referrals from student body	Principal Assistant Principals Interventionist	Teachers Academic Counselors Students
August 2025 - May 2026	Utilize areas from Capturing Kids Heart Bi-Annual Survey as identified areas for follow up and targets to improve school culture at Burger for teachers and students	Student behavior data Behavior Interventions Behavior Training CKH Survey Data Student Leaders	Decreased number of office referrals Improved CKH survey scores at in targeted areas Clear understanding of expectations by all students and staff	Counselors Principal Assistant Principals CKH Coach	Students Teachers Parents PBIS Committee CKH Coach