

**Picayune School District**

**Dropout Prevention Plan**

**2023-2024**



**Mr. Dean Shaw, Superintendent**

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## Team Members

School Team Members	Position
Debbie Smith	Curriculum Director
Kristi Mitchell	Principal, Picayune Memorial High School
Toni Tucei	Asst. Principal, Picayune Memorial High School
Renee Johns	Asst. Principal, Picayune Junior High School
Dr. Katy Canulette	Principal, Roseland Park Elementary
Dr. Sonya Myers	Program Manager, ECP
Jill Smith	Director of Career and Technical Education
Dr. Brannon Johnson	Director of Exceptional Education
Daphnie Beebe	Director of Center for Alternative Education
Tarva Cook	Principal, South Side Elementary
Dr. Jeremy Williams	Principal, South Side Lower Elementary
Diane Wise	Special Services Director

### Picayune School District Accountability Data Utilized

According to 2022 Accountability Results, Picayune School District's Graduation Rate was 79.7%. Therefore, in addition to Dropout Prevention Plan, School Restructuring Plan with SMART Goals for our High School and Middle School using MDE Early Warning System was developed.

List of Data Available
Attendance Rate
Graduation Rate
Dropout Rate
Disciplinary Infraction Reports
School Population
Students with Disabilities
Grade Point Average
MTSS Data
Early Childhood Program Indicators/Data
Statewide Assessments Results by student/school

## Picayune School District Programs and Strategies

### **Student Readiness for College and Career**

Students and parents are advised about higher level course offerings at school with Honors, AP, and dual enrollment options. Picayune Memorial High School (PMHS) has open enrollment for AP courses. Dual enrollment requirements are set by Pearl River Community College, located in Poplarville, MS. All juniors take ACT prep unless the parents and students opt-out. Opt-out is only available for students who have already met the Mississippi College and Career Benchmarks as set by ACT scores. PMHS uses Magoosh as the ACT Prep resources vendor, and the juniors will rotate in nine-week rotations with certified teachers. This year, PMHS will use Major Clarity for career and college exploration and as an online platform to house students' Individual Success Plans. Students in the class of 2022 and beyond choose diploma option endorsements from MDE's distinguished, academic, career/technical, and traditional endorsements.

### **Instruction and Learning**

Picayune School District Early Childhood Programs (ECP) utilizes a wide variety of curricula which are scientifically valid and have standardized training procedures and materials to support implementation. These programs also utilize other screening measures, observational tools, hands on activities which it allows teachers to easily identify potential developmental delays and giftedness in language, motor, self-help, social-emotional, and cognitive skills.

The Mississippi Department of Education requires that all Pre-K Collaborative Programs complete the Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. The End-of-Year target score for four-year-old (Pre-K 4) students is 498. The average scaled score for Picayune School District State Pre-K Collaborative classes for 2022-2023 was 594, which indicates that the majority of children fall into the "late emergent reader" category where they can identify most of the letters of the alphabet and can match most of the letters to their sounds. The student is also beginning to "read" picture books and familiar words around the home. Through repeated reading of favorite books with an adult, students at this stage are building their vocabularies, listening skills, and understandings of print. These data show that children leaving our program are more than ready for kindergarten.

K-12 students' progress is monitored using formative and summative assessments are administered frequently, and teachers and administrators work collaboratively to redesign practice and instruction to fit the needs of individual learners. Teachers who teach courses, which have an EOC assessment, use common assessments throughout the class to identify students who are off track and need targeted interventions to obtain a better understanding of the information. English I, foundations of Biology, World History, US Government, Economics, English II, Algebra I, Biology I, and US History will also use Mastery View/Instructure to create common formative assessments to monitor learning. Academic assistance is available to all students throughout the day. Students, as identified through data, and as needing support, are given time with an instructor during the school day for remediation, extra support, and/or pull-out tutoring. Students with lower than a C in 8<sup>th</sup> grade math will now take math essentials for high school and foundations of Algebra in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. These students will then take Algebra I in 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

Technology is utilized during instruction, and lessons are integrated through Google Classroom.

Effective communication is modeled by teachers in the classroom setting. Discussion and collaboration among students can be seen in various techniques such as Socratic seminar/circles.

### **Attendance and Discipline**

Picayune School District begins emphasizing the importance of attendance in our Early Childhood Programs. Parents must notify the centers by telephone or through a written note when a child is absent. All unexcused absences are followed up with a call from a Family Advocate. Federal guidelines require that children enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start attend at least 85% of the time. When a child misses 10% or more of class for any reason, it is considered chronic absenteeism. If this occurs, the sites' Family Advocate schedules a parent conference. During the conference, the Family Advocate addresses how the parent/guardian will work to overcome obstacles that are preventing the child from attending the program. This process during the early childhood period starts parents with positive habits toward ensuring that their children attend school daily to maximize learning. For the 2022-23 school year PSD ECP had an enrollment of 438 and an attendance rate of 88.43% attendance rate.

At the secondary level, daily attendance calls are made by nurse/interventionist/counselors. Teachers make parent contact after a student misses three consecutive days. Interventionist/SRO makes home visits as needed. Reports will be run weekly and reviewed. For students failing, support staff will meet with them and contact parents as well as each teacher will make parent contact for any student failing and will maintain contact until students is passing. For students with discipline concerns, teachers will make parent contact to discuss minor infractions. If behavior continues, referral to a counselor will be made. The counselor and students will create a behavior plan and counselor will monitor progress and communicate with parents and administration. Positive incentives are in place to promote attendance and behavior. At PMHS, this program is called High Tide.

The Positive Behavior Specialist for the Picayune School District supports students and teachers by the following: communicate and formally meet with all stakeholders including students, teachers/staff, administrators and principals with identifying ongoing classroom/school behaviors, draft targeted support plans or behavior intervention plans when required after conducting an data driven analysis of each student with ongoing behaviors, methodologically acquire feedback, data, observations and conduct interviews with students and staff in order to curtail ongoing behaviors and make formative assessments, during a student crisis, give immediate support to the individual student upon notification from a school, monthly perform check ins with students with emotional concerns and act as a resource for each, compile and maintain files for each student who has reached Tier 3 Behavior, ensuring that all students are treated equitably and supported fully and recommend needed adjustments, maximize resources and evaluate the effectiveness of specific support plans.

At the Elementary level, positive incentives are in place to promote attendance and behavior. This is done through each school's PBIS Team which includes but not limited to monthly movies, drawings, celebrations, lunch/breakfast with Principals and Student of the Month.

### **Reducing the Retention Rates in Grades Kindergarten, First, and Second**

Picayune School District (PSD) has interwoven early care and education programs – including Early Head Start, Head Start, EHS Childcare Partnerships (CCP), and State-funded Pre-K programs – into a seamless,

high-quality system that prepares children for school success. Specifically, PSD Early Childhood Programs (ECP) currently provides family support services, including prenatal education (pregnant women), parenting support / skill training, health services, case management, linkages to resources, and father / male involvement activities to 448 families across Pearl River County. High quality early childhood education, in itself is a strategy to reduce dropout rates. Specifically, meta-analysis of 22 experimental early childhood education studies (McCoy et.al., 2017) has found that on average, participation in early childhood education leads to statistically significant reductions in special education placement and grade retention, as well as increases in high school graduation rates.

All elementary schools in the Picayune School District utilize data-driven instruction. Universal Screener Assessments are administered three times annually. This data is used to continually evaluate student progress and adjust instruction accordingly. The district also utilizes a Kindergarten screening test to identify strengths and weaknesses of students during annual enrollment. All kindergarten students must participate in pre- and post-tests to determine instructional placement.

The district is committed to a college and career readiness curriculum. The combination of data-driven instruction and a college and career readiness curriculum is a key component of reducing dropout and retention rates. Academic success is closely monitored by the school's MTSS and the Tier process/RTI is utilized with school specific methods to assist the uniqueness of the individual student in an effort to reduce retention rates in K-2.

#### **Targeting Subgroups**

Exceptional education (special education) students are tracked and provided individualized instruction through inclusion, resource, and general education teachers. Students from low-economic backgrounds who are in the greatest need are provided special tutoring before, after, and during extended school year. EL students' grades and attendance are monitored quarterly. Parents are invited to meetings with an administrator, EL Coordinator, counselor and EL facilitator quarterly to discuss student progress.

Picayune Junior High School (PJHS) uses data to identify individuals who may be in danger of dropping out of school. The data used includes attendance rates, failures, retentions, and state assessment results. Interventions include a variety of resources to promote mastery. The district also utilizes contractual consultants to assist in data analysis and tracking as well as coaching faculty and staff to ensure rigorous instruction. The PJHS also conducts an extended school year program in order to provide additional assistance to those students who may need additional support.

PMHS specifically targets the bottom twenty-five (25) percent academically and provides additional support. The support includes students being placed in classrooms where there are two (2) teachers, pull-out instruction, and larger incentives for these students in the school High Tide program (student positive behavior initiative). PMHS conducts classes on a 4 x 4 "block" format. Some students, including those who fail state assessments and/or may require more intensive instruction for academic core classes, may take classes that last the entire school year. Students who fail state assessments and the classes associated with those assessments are given remedial instruction in the form of pull-outs and tutoring. Effective the 2020-2021 school year, Picayune Memorial High School placed a special focus on attendance to reduce retention and dropouts in all subgroups.

### **Developing Dropout Recovery Initiatives**

A Focus on Students Age Seventeen (17) through Twenty-One (21), Who Dropped out of School (i.e., Mississippi Works)

PMHS counselors and administrators track and contact students who drop out of school. When appropriate, an administrator will make home visits to these students. The district conducts GED classes at the Center for Alternative Education (district site) during the school day. Additionally, the counseling department offers access and information on Mississippi Works, as well as Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

### **Alternative Programs and JDC Transitions**

The district utilizes a three-step plan to assist students in transitioning from Juvenile Detention Centers (JDCs) to their home schools. Transitioning students are initially placed at the Center for Alternative Education (CAE). The CAE placement allows students to transition in a small environment and allows for extensive one-on-one instruction. Students are transitioned back to their home schools based on achievement, behavior, and individual needs. Students and their parents sign a transition plan and a Statement of Assurances when returning to their home schools. These documents allow all parties to understand and document both the individual students' needs and expectations.

JDCs send reports daily of students who are retained in their facility. PMHS and CAE will then send assignments so students do not get behind in their classwork while detained. PMHS works directly with individual teachers, school attendance officers, social workers, and other pertinent staff members to track progress of students and provide a smooth transition in order to return to PMHS. When returning, students are counseled and provided an educational track suitable for their success.

### **Drop-out Prevention Measures at Center for Alternative Education**

Jr. high students who have reached or will reach the age of 16 during 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade are sent to the alternative school for a "fast-track" program where students can enroll in a number of Carnegie unit courses on the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level, if they meet certain criteria. This allows students to regain credits after being retained one or more years and possibly catch up with their same-aged peers. In addition, Parents of students who are struggling socially, academically, and/or behaviorally may request a change-of-placement to the alternative setting for more intense individualized instruction for the students. PJHS and PMHS administrators have the option of recommending this C-O-P to the parents of at-risk students. Alternative education offers the High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) program for students who are intent on dropping out of school and who meet certain criteria for enrollment into the program. Alternative education is adequately staffed with enough certified teachers to teach approximately 40 Carnegie unit awarding courses meeting MS graduation requirements for a traditional high school diploma.

## PMHS SMART GOALS 2023-2024

Increase our yearly attendance rate by 2%

- Daily attendance calls by nurse/interventionist/counselor
- Teachers will make parent contact after a student misses three consecutive days
- Teachers/nurse/interventionist/counselors will record contacts and report to administration every 4 ½ weeks
- Interventionist/SRO will make home visits as needed
- Maintain attendance records and report truant students as required
- Monthly MSIS attendance rates will be monitored by administration to see if gains are being made

Decrease student retention rate of 9<sup>th</sup> graders

- Daily attendance calls by nurse/interventionist/counselor
- Teachers will make parent contact after a student misses three consecutive days
- Teachers/nurse/interventionist/counselors will record contacts and report to administration every 4 ½ weeks
- Interventionist/SRO will make home visits as needed
- Counselors/interventionist will run grade reports weekly
- Upon failing, the student will have a meeting with support staff and parent contact will also be made
- Teachers will make parent contact at progress reports for all failing students and will maintain weekly communication until students are passing
- Leadership team will meet at the end of each quarter and monitor progress

Decrease the number of habitually disruptive students

- Teachers will call home before writing a disciplinary referral for a minor infraction.
- If behavior continues, teacher will make a counselor referral.
- If behavior continues, teacher will then write a disciplinary referral.
- If behavior still continues, the counselor and student will create a behavior plan
- The counselor will monitor progress and communicate with parents and administration



## PJHS SMART GOALS 2023-24

Obtain an average Daily Attendance of 93%

- Daily attendance calls by nurse/records clerk/attendance clerk/RTI/counselor
- Teachers will make parent contact after a student misses three consecutive days
- Recognition of perfect attendance/STAR students
- SRO will make home visits as needed
- Maintain attendance records and report truant students as required
- Monthly MSIS attendance rates will be monitored by administration to see if gains are being made

Reduce the number of discipline referrals per quarter by 5%

- Implement positive referrals
- Post in hallways and classrooms expectation posters
- Engage students and families about importance of classroom/school behaviors
- Conduct staff meetings/professional development for classroom management

Increase the percentage of seventh grade ELA students performing at a level 3 passing to 43%

- Incorporate reading and writing across the curriculum
- Science classes will incorporate weekly nonfiction science articles in grade-level text, proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range
- Organize/Plan activities to recognize student achievement in ELA

Increase the percentage of seventh grade Math students performing at level 3 passing to 30%

- Integrate math with science units
- Provide hands on activities utilizing manipulatives and lab activities
- Utilize teacher PLCs to improve communication across all curricula

Increase the percentage of seventh grade students with disabilities performing at a level 3 passing to 20%

- Analyze data and differentiate instruction to meet individual needs
- Increase reading of nonfictional articles in small groups

## Dropout Prevention/Restructuring Plan Assurances Page

On behalf of Picayune School District, I hereby submit the 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: Dean Shaw

School Board Chair: Jake Smith

  
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7/31/23 DATE