

DROPOUT PREVENTION PLAN

Duval County Public Schools

I. Introduction

A. Overview

1. Through a coherent set of structures, the Dropout Prevention Plan is designed to provide continuity in the dropout prevention programs in Duval County Public Schools. Students who are identified as academically unsuccessful in the district's regular educational program as evidenced by low test scores, retention, failing grades, low grade point average, falling behind in earning credits, not meeting the state proficiency levels in reading, mathematics, or writing, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, neglect, or court assignment will be provided with an educational program to meet their needs and prevent a dropout situation from developing.
2. The Dropout Prevention Programs of Duval County address content and performance standards at levels 2-12. The National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) New Performance Standards and the Sunshine State Standards (SSS) have been adopted by the Duval County School District. Each of the dropout prevention programs includes the standards specific to each individual program plan. These standards allow teachers to provide students with standards-based instruction in the basic skills areas of reading, language arts, math, science and social studies.
3. Career awareness, employability skills, character development and law education are included as part of the curriculum to encourage the students to become productive members of the community. The curriculum is structured to enable students to develop the skills necessary for effective interpersonal, multiethnic, and intercultural group interaction.
4. The goals for the district's dropout prevention plan are listed below:
 - a. To increase the district's graduation rate, decrease the district's dropout rate, and reduce the number of students overage for their grade.
 - b. To identify and address the needs of all potential dropouts through innovative, research-based educational programs, and standards-based instruction.

- c. To provide opportunities for dropout prevention staff to develop skills in identifying needs of dropout students and to develop appropriate interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary techniques and instructional strategies for meeting those needs, including strategies and techniques that reflect the cultural learning styles and characteristics of all students.
 - d. To promote the coordination of the school district, businesses, community agencies, governmental agencies and parent(s)/guardian in dropout prevention efforts.
 - e. To recognize and respect ethnic and cultural diversity so that societal cohesiveness is based on the shared experiences of ethnically and culturally diverse people, thereby maximizing equality for all individuals and groups.
5. For students who have been unable to meet promotional requirements in the basic instructional program, the Dropout Prevention Plan provides the opportunity for these students to achieve success and, through standards completion, to build competencies in the basic skills, which will enable them to become productive members of today's global society.

B. District Philosophy of Dropout Prevention

It is a goal of the Duval County Public School System to provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students in the district. This includes providing appropriate educational programs for those students who find it difficult to adjust to a traditional learning environment. Therefore, to meet the needs of these students, educational alternatives designed to reduce the risk of leaving school early will be implemented as outlined in this document. The principles listed below will be used to guide the implementation of all dropout prevention programs in the district.

1. Each student in the district who meets the eligibility criteria for a program should have the opportunity to participate in a dropout prevention program.
2. Since each student is different in emotional, mental, and physical characteristics, no single instructional method or program can meet the needs of all students.
3. Learning styles and rates vary among students; therefore, the instructional program should be paced to correspond with the students' individual needs.

4. All students are capable of learning; therefore, student expectancy in a program should be related to capability. Students should be provided opportunities to maximize their potential and to enhance their personal development.
5. Each program should have a standards-based curriculum.
6. The primary goal of dropout prevention programs should be to provide an intervention designed to ultimately mainstream the students into the regular school environment.
7. Each program should be positive rather than punitive.
8. The dropout prevention programs should coordinate efforts with appropriate vocational programs, educational and governmental agencies, community services, parent(s)/guardian, and students to maximize the possibility of success for each student.
9. The dropout prevention programs should include a multicultural curriculum that is comprehensive in scope and sequence, presents a holistic view of ethnic and cultural groups, encourages character development, provides law education and is an integral part of the total school curriculum. This effort complies with local and state requirements for ethnic and cultural awareness, character development and law education to be an integral part of the total school environment.

C. Assignment of a Dropout Prevention Director

Dr. Kris Larsen has been designated as the Supervisor of Alternative Education and Safety Net programs for the Duval County Public Schools.

D. Exceptions to the Written Plan

Any variations to the implementation or exceptions to the eligibility criteria require written permission from the Chief Academic Officer, Duval County Public Schools.