



Tuesday, September 18, 2012

To: NJSD Board of Education  
From: Timothy Gantz, Director of Pupil Services  
CC: NJSD Central Administration  
RE: District At Risk Plan

Included with this memo you will find the district's At-Risk Plan for the 2012-13 school year. In addition, I would like to share information regarding some of the work done by the staff during the 2011-12 school year.

During the 2011-12 school year, the At-Risk Committee worked to refine how we identify at-risk students within our district. We found that the procedure and identification varied greatly between grade levels and schools. Our goal was to create a tool that would meet the requirements of the state indicators, increase consistency, and expand the parameters as to not overlook the identification of at-risk students. That tool has been created and is still a working document. The committee will continue to analyze the filters we are using in hopes to design a streamlined, consistent, and flexible identification and service delivery model for at-risk students.

An initial analysis was done by studying those who dropped out of Neenah High School (NHS). Committee members were charged with identifying commonalities of NHS dropouts. In doing so, many of the District and state at-risk indicators manifested themselves. We found that a large number of NHS dropouts were transfer students. In the academic year of 2011-12, forty-five students dropped out. Twenty-three of our dropout students (51%) transferred into the Neenah Joint School District. Thirteen (29%) were identified as Special Education Students; and seven (16%) were either a teen parent or were identified as having AODA issues.

Our goal moving forward is to finalize and implement a tool that allows us to accurately identify at-risk students and those at the threshold of at-risk. The goal becomes one that is aligned with District academic interventions. This will allow us to focus on developing a tiered service model that anticipates students who may end up as at-risk; catering services to their needs, as well as providing a path for exiting if the student is deemed able to.



**Neenah Joint School District**  
**At-Risk Plan**  
**2012-13**

**Neenah At-Risk Mission Statement**

The purpose of Neenah's At-Risk Programming is to help all students succeed by developing a sense of belonging, becoming academically competent and learning to be productive and responsible citizens at school and in life.

Developed by:

Vicki Bayer, SAP Program Coordinator  
Matthew Becker, Special Education Teacher, NHS-DC  
Brian Borchardt, Alternative Education Teacher, NHS  
Timothy Gantz, Director of Pupil Services  
Jill Gordee, Counselor, NHS  
Mike O'Neill, Associate Principal, NHS  
Ryan Peterson, Alternative Education Teacher, NHS  
Stephanie Phernetton, Principal, Shattuck  
Kyle Popp, Alternative Education Teacher, Shattuck  
Rose Unser, Lead Teacher, NHS-DC

Approved by the Board of Education on 9/18/12

## **Equity Statement**

The Board of Education shall continue its policy of nondiscrimination and, in compliance with Section 118.13(1), Wis. Statutes, no person may be denied admission to any public school operated by the District or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, student services, recreational or other program or activity because of the person's sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against under the terms of Section 118.13(1), Wis. Statutes, may file a complaint with the Superintendent of Schools under the procedure set forth in Board Policy Numbers 255.2 and 255.3, utilizing a State Coordinator designated by the Superintendent.

# **NJSD At-Risk Plan 2012-13**

## **Goals**

1. To increase school success and graduation rate for students identified as at-risk.
2. To provide opportunities for all students to feel a sense of belonging to the school community.
3. To reduce student failure and potential dropouts.
4. To provide early intervention for students identified as being at-risk.
5. To involve parents and community resources in meeting the needs of students identified as at-risk.

## **Introduction**

Wisconsin state statute 118.153 (2) (a) and Department of Public Instruction PI 25.03 (1 & 2) states that every school board shall identify the children who are enrolled in the school district who are at risk of not graduating from high school, and annually develop a plan describing how the school board will meet their needs. The statute also states that every board shall make available programs to serve children at-risk. As part of the district plan, each board must describe how the board will identify and meet the needs of the children identified to be at risk. The Neenah Joint School District (NJSD) is dedicated to educating all students, as evident in its mission and vision statements and strategic plans. The District mission statement is as follows:

We, the community of the NJSD, are committed to educating all students so they will attain their maximum potential. We will prepare our youth to lead productive, fulfilling, and successful lives in a rapidly changing world. We will promote a passion for excellence in all aspects of the educational program. We share this responsibility with each student, family, and community member.

The District's vision statement developed in March, 2006 states:

The Neenah Joint School District relentlessly pursues the continuous improvement of the total learning experience for all NJSD stakeholders by providing a nurturing, safe and stimulating environment that values individual differences, celebrates achievement, and exceeds the expectations of the Neenah Community.

The need to address concerns regarding students who are at-risk of not graduating is a critical one. Researchers have suggested that school dropouts cost the nation from sixty to two hundred twenty-eight billion dollars in welfare each year, lost revenue, unemployment expenditures and crime prevention dollars. Further, personal consequences include less earning potential, limited employment opportunities, and low self-esteem.

This plan assures that the Neenah Joint School District (NJSD) is in compliance with Wisconsin Statute §118.153 relating to "Children at risk of not graduating from high school" by annually identifying the children at risk and developing a plan to meet their needs. The plan includes identification strategies, articulation between levels, and supportive programs for Pre-K through grade 4, middle grades 5 through 8, and high school grades 9 through 12. The plan will also include strategies for parental notification and involvement.

In order to address the problem of students who are at risk of not graduating, one needs to understand the true nature of the problem. This necessitates using the most accurate criteria for predicting students who will not graduate.

## **Pre-K – Grade 4**

### **Potential Indicators:**

The state does not provide criteria for students in grades Pre-K through 4, however, during the 2007-08 school year, the cumulative and behavioral records of two years of NJSD dropouts were examined to determine whether there were other potential key indicators contributing to the student's failure to graduate. This study of student records identified the following common factors in students' lives from Pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

At the elementary level, students are identified through informal assessments, test scores, teacher recommendation, and parent referrals:

- Chronic/severe behavior problems
- Academic delay in reading and/or math
- Habitual truancy (absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all of five or more days on which school is held during a school semester)
- Transfer student
- Traumatic event
  - Change in marital status of parents, including separation
  - Parent incarcerated
  - Death of a family member or close friend
  - Parent with alcohol or drug abuse problems
  - Serious illness requiring hospitalization for student or family member
  - Other
- Free/Reduced Lunch

### **Monitoring Student Progress**

A student with potential indicators of children and youth at-risk may be referred to the school's Learning Support Team (LST) by teachers, school counselors, or other school district personnel. These teams meet regularly throughout the school year. Each LST, after identifying students who may be considered at risk, will monitor the progress, on Infinite Campus, of each identified student on an ongoing basis. As determined through the Learning Support Services Referral (LSSR) process, individual students may be identified and enrolled in programs or provided services to meet their individual needs.

At the end of each school year, each school administrator will forward to the Director of Pupil Services the names of students who meet the State's at-risk criteria. This will occur before July 1 each year. The Director will forward the list of students to the appropriate schools at the beginning of the following school year.

### **Programs and Services to Support Individual Student Achievement and Success in School**

A variety of supports is available to encourage student success and is designed to meet individual student learning needs. The educational opportunities available to the students are monitored on an ongoing basis to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. NJSD provides a wide range of quality options to both special and regular education students.

Following is a list of a number of the current accommodations, services, and programs available at the Pre-K through Grade 4 level within the NJSD from which a LST can choose to develop an accommodation/intervention plans for individual students:

- Title I Math Support
- English Language Learner services
- Supportive Reading
- School Health Services
- School Counseling
- Education and Career Planning Conferences
- School Psychological Services
- Gifted and Talented
- Student Assistance Program
- Special Education
- Bullying prevention
- Section 504 Plans
- Learning Support Services Referral (LSSR)
- Summer School
- Other

## Secondary: Grades 5 – 12

### Potential Indicators/Criteria for Grades 5 – 12

Currently, the State of Wisconsin identifies “children at risk” as pupils in grades 5 to 12 who are at risk of not graduating from high school because they are dropouts or are 2 or more of the following:

- **One or more years behind their age group in the number of high school credits attained**  
A student shall be determined to be behind in his or her age group in the number of high school credits attained if in grades 9 through 12 the student falls three or more credits behind as evidenced by credits recorded in academic history. Technology will run extracts to determine credit deficiency.
- **Two or more years behind their age group in basic skill levels**  
A student shall be determined to be behind two or more years than their age group in basic skill levels in Math and/or Reading as evidenced by grades and/or below proficient status on the WKCE in Reading and Math.
- **Habitual truants, as defined in §118.16(1)(a)**  
A student shall be determined to be “habitually truant” if all or part of five days in a semester without an acceptable excuse are missed.
- **Parents (teen parents; male and female and pregnant teens)**
- **Adjudicated delinquents**  
A student is determined to be delinquent based on reports received from the court system. The list of adjudicated students is kept confidentially by pupil services office.
- **8th grade pupils whose score in each subject area on the examination administered under §118.30(1m)(am) 1. was below the basic level, 8th grade pupils who failed the examination under §118.30 (1m)(am) 2. and 8th grade pupils who failed to be promoted to the 9th grade**

NJSD is also including the following criteria based on a 2007-08 review of student records that identified the following common factors for students who did not earn a NHS diploma:

- Transfer student
- Traumatic event:
  - Change in marital status of parents, including separation
  - Parent incarcerated
  - Death of a family member or close friend
  - Parent with AODA problems
  - Serious illness requiring hospitalization for student or family member
  - Homelessness
  - Other
- Free/reduced lunch

**Monitoring Student Progress**

A student with potential indicators of children and youth at-risk may be referred to the school’s Learning Support Team (LST) by teachers, school counselors, or other District personnel. These teams meet every week. Each LST, after identifying students who may be considered at-risk, will monitor the progress, on Infinite Campus, of each identified student on an ongoing basis. As determined through the LSSR process, individual students may be identified and enrolled in programs or provided services to meet their individual needs.

At the end of each school year, a designated school administrator will forward to the Director of Pupil Services the names of students who meet the State’s at risk criteria. This will occur around August 1 each year. The Director will forward the list of students to the appropriate schools at the beginning of the following school year.

**Programs and Services to Support Individual Student Achievement and Success in School**

Following is a list of a number of the current accommodations, services, and programs available at the particular grade levels within the NJSD from which a LST can choose to develop an accommodation/intervention plan for individual students:

<b>Grades 5 - 8</b>	<b>Grades 9-12</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Title I Academic Support</li> <li>• English Language Learner Services</li> <li>• Academic Improvement in Middle School (AIMS)</li> <li>• Math Support</li> <li>• Supportive Reading</li> <li>• School Health Services</li> <li>• School Counseling</li> <li>• Education and Career Planning Conferences (school counselors)</li> <li>• School Psychological Services</li> <li>• Gifted and Talented</li> <li>• Student Assistance Program</li> <li>• Special Education</li> <li>• Olweus Bullying prevention</li> <li>• Section 504 Plans</li> <li>• Learning Support Services Referral (LSSR)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Title I Academic Support</li> <li>• Core Tutorials</li> <li>• English Language Learner services</li> <li>• Alternative High Schools</li> <li>• Neenah Employment and Academic Training (NEAT)</li> <li>• NovaNET</li> <li>• Supportive Reading (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades)</li> <li>• School Health Services</li> <li>• School Counseling</li> <li>• Education and Career Planning Conferences (school counselors)</li> <li>• School Psychological Services</li> <li>• Gifted and Talented Programming</li> <li>• Launch</li> <li>• Strive</li> <li>• Freshman Seminar</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Assistance Program</li> <li>• Quest</li> <li>• Read 180</li> <li>• Fox Valley Alternative School (Goodwill)</li> <li>• General Education Development (GED) Option Two</li> <li>• High School Equivalency Diploma preparation</li> <li>• Olweus Bullying prevention</li> <li>• Summer School</li> <li>• Section 504 Plans</li> <li>• Special Education</li> </ul>
---	---

**Parent Notification and Involvement**

According to Ch. PI 25.04 (5) the district must notify each pupil and his or her parent in writing whenever the pupil has been identified as a child at risk. The Department of Pupil Services will send the notification before the school year begins. The notice shall include all of the following:

- (a) The name and telephone number of a person the parent or pupil can contact regarding the school district's children at-risk plan or program.
- (b) A description of the district's children at-risk plan.
- (c) A statement that the pupil is eligible to be enrolled under the district plan to serve children at risk.
- (d) A description of the at-risk programs available and how the pupil may participate in a specific program if more than one program is offered as part of the district plan.
- (e) A statement to inform the parent that he or she may select one or more programs in which the pupil will be enrolled, if the pupil meets the prerequisites for the specific program requested.
- (f) Describe the procedure for requesting that the pupil be enrolled in the specific at-risk program selected by the parent. The request shall be in writing, by signature on a district provided form, or be given verbally to the person responsible for enrolling the pupil in the program. This person shall record the date and time of a verbal request and whether this request was made in person or by phone.
- (g) Identify the process that a parent may use if the parent disagrees with the planned services.
- (h) Ensure that the special education and related services needs of a child with a disability, as defined in s. 115.76 (3) (5), Stats., are first addressed in the child's individualized education program developed pursuant to s. 115.80 (4) 115.787, Stats., whenever that child is also eligible to be served in a children at risk program.

**Evaluation of At-Risk Programming**

1. The student's school success will be based on the student's specific identified criteria.



2. Grades and attendance will be monitored at all levels.
3. Student progress toward annual goals for student achievement will be monitored through assessments. Parents will receive communication about student progress through student report cards, annual pre- and post-testing for math and reading, progress reports, district staff monitoring of D/F lists, parent/teacher conferences, and individual conferencing with parents.
4. Dropout statistics will be reported annually.
5. The school counselor will contact dropouts to determine how they might be supported in returning to an appropriate educational program.
6. The at-risk plan will be provided to the Board of Education for approval each summer.

In the past, the use of the state's criteria has resulted in the identification of few or no students determined to be at-risk at the elementary level, 20-30 at the middle school level, and 100-200 students at the high school level. It is important for the District to create a proactive identification system to prevent at-risk status for its students.

### **Categorical Aid Reimbursement**

The governor's budget eliminated the children at-risk categorical aid, but the language requiring the District's plan to identify and serve remains the same.

(District Letterhead)

PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER  
LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES  
FOR STUDENTS AT RISK

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The State of Wisconsin requires districts to provide additional instruction for students who are at risk of not graduating. The purpose of this letter is to notify you that your child, (Name), will receive intervention services to promote his or her academic success. The services your child will receive will include:

Your child has been chosen to receive these services based on the school's Learning Support Team (LST) recommendation under the Neenah Joint School District plan to serve children at risk. The NJSD At-Risk Plan is available online at the district website at

Ongoing evaluation will help the LST and you determine the level of services that your child receives and the need to continue or discontinue these services. The goal for providing these services is to increase the likelihood that your child will be successful in meeting the NJSD graduation requirements.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this programming, please contact your child's school counselor, (name), at (920) 751-. If the school counselor does not hear from you regarding this letter by (date), your child will begin receiving the services as described. We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child has a successful school career.

Sincerely,

Principal