

Work Ready Community Application

Anderson County, Kentucky

December 15, 2016

Narrative 1: Graduation Rate

Goal: Raise the graduation rate from 97.5 to 98% by 2022.

Narrative 1 Graduation Rate:

Anderson County Schools' current graduation rate is 97.5 per the 2015-2016 school year assessment data. The following programs have been initiated by the Anderson County School District and its partners to increase the graduation rate to 98% by 2022:

Truancy Diversion Program

The Anderson County Middle School and Anderson County High School personnel have collaborated with Court Designated Workers, the Family Court Judge, and the Director of Pupil Personnel to implement a Truancy Diversion Program. This program was recently modified and extended into the elementary schools.

The Truancy Diversion Program (TDP) assists parents and students who are at risk of being charged with truancy offenses because of too many unexcused absences. The program uses a team approach to help students understand the importance of good attendance, develop good habits related to participation in school, improve their overall school experience, and remove barriers impeding the student's success.

The TDP program meets the needs of truant students by using education, prevention and accountability to resolve school attendance issues. If initial means are not successful, other means through the juvenile court system are implemented. The overall goal is to improve overall school attendance and create habits that students can use as they transition into adult life. The TDP is composed of the following phases:

- Phase 1: When a student reaches three unexcused absences they along with their parents are invited to attend a TDP Phase I meeting. During this meeting a short presentation by the Principal, DPP, CDW, and Family Court Judge outline what might happen if the issues with attendance are not immediately resolved. Afterwards each student along with his/her parent meet individually with school staff to review their personal attendance, grades and behavior. Questions are asked to determine what the cause of the attendance might be and an offering of assistance

is made. Finally, a confidentiality form is signed by staff as an assurance to the student and parent that the information will remain confidential.

- Phase 2: School staff notifies the DPP that a student has reached at least six unexcused absences. The DPP then completes a home visit to notify the parent. As part of the visit the DPP is also taking note of home issues that may be a hindrance to the student's attendance. After the visit the DPP completes AOC –JV-41, an Affidavit and Truancy Evaluation Form. This along with student data is turned over to the CDW. The CDW then contacts parents for a meeting to review the report and typically places the students on Diversion for 20 weeks.

If the student does not meet the expectations of the CDW, the case is closed and turned over to the Family Court Judge. Once in court, students are placed under court orders. Failure to follow court orders is seen as contempt and can result in assignment to Juvenile Detention.

At the elementary level, parents are invited to the school for a large group meeting once the student reaches six unexcused absences where they are issued final notice as required by law. Each parent receives information about truancy and has the opportunity to ask questions. These meetings are held monthly.

After this point any additional absences may result in charges being filed for truancy, punishable by \$100 per day of student unexcused absence.

Career Pathway and Schools Within a School Concept (SWS)

The ACHS Schools Within Our School program is geared to create academic-focused student communities.

The School Within a School (SWS) program includes three schools: School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) led by Mrs. Kayla Smith Math teacher; School of Practical Living and Career Studies (PLCS) led by Mrs. Heather Adams, Family and Consumer Science teacher and Mr. Elliot Bowman, Agriculture teacher, and School of Liberal Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences led by Mr. Corey Sayre, Social Studies teacher. These teacher leaders will coordinate a myriad of programs involving career exploration, post-secondary planning, and real-world contacts.

When students enter the high school, they choose career majors, which are divided into the three schools in order to create a more focused concentration on advising and exploration opportunities. This program was a natural fit for our comprehensive advising program to ensure students become college and career ready.

The SWS program has several goals: 1. To provide opportunities for students to make contacts with colleges, universities, technical centers, and employers in their areas of interest. 2. To create smaller communities for increasing belongingness, sharing of interests and ideas in their career majors, and developing study groups and specialized educational experiences with their peers. 3. To engage local community stakeholders in sharing real-world applications of the career pathways students choose, providing shadowing or work-based learning opportunities, and ultimately, working together with students and staff to enhance our Anderson County community.

We encourage community business leaders and organizations to contact our deans for the schools that their businesses would be best represented by and offer a partnership so that our students can continue to receive a quality education and take real-world experiences into their post-secondary institutions. Anything we can do to move our students to the top in the state to be competitive in jobs in this global economy, we want to try.

Dual Credit with Local Community College and Work Release Program

The Anderson County High School partners with our local community college, Bluegrass Community and Technical College, Lawrenceburg Campus. The Dual Credit program allows students to be enrolled in both their high school and the college simultaneously and receive credit from both institutions for the same course. Students must reach college benchmarks to participate. Currently, we have six BCTC classes that are taught at ACHS. The classes include English 101, 102, MAT 150, HIS 109, BIO 112 and BIO 113. Seniors also attend classes at the Lawrenceburg BCTC Campus.

Students are provided an opportunity to participate in the Work Release Program. They obtain a job to work during a certain time of the school day. They are evaluated by their employer on their work ethic, abilities and skills they were hired to do.

Area Technical Center

Anderson County Schools partners with Mercer County to provide services for students at an area technical center. Anderson County High School students that meet requirements are able to enroll at classes at the Harrodsburg Area Technical Center to take prepare and train for a specific career pathway of their choice.

Credit Recovery and Alternative School Placements

Anderson County High School offers Plato credit recovery classes for students who have failed two or more classes and are in danger of falling behind and not on track for graduation. Services are offered on campus while students continue a regular schedule. A teacher facilitates the class to help provide assistance to students.

APEX Academy is an alternative school setting offered as an option for Anderson County at-risk middle and high school students who are in danger of dropping out, failing, have medical needs and/or who have behavior concerns and have not been successful in a traditional setting. Students are enrolled in online courses and taught through small group instruction. Social skills are taught and daily goals are set to keep students focused on their progress. Students who meet graduation requirements are offered early graduation so they can transition into the community to work or continue their education.

Social Worker and Early Graduation

Anderson County Schools has a social worker who works to identify at-risk students who are in danger of dropping out of school. She will meet with them to work a graduation plan and check on their progress. Every option is explored for the individual student and they are encouraged to create and follow a graduation plan. At times, they are transitioned to the alternative school setting or credit recovery program to help them meet their unique needs and graduate.

Anderson County students who apply for early graduation and who complete the graduation requirements are offered early graduation to allow them opportunities to transition into the work force and/or to continue their education at the college level. Our goal is to ensure they are college and career ready and allow them to transition when they are ready.

Intervention Services and Academic Labs

Students are offered intervention services during the school day to help them reach benchmarks. A data wall is kept to show student progress and for teachers to select students so they will work with to help reach benchmark. Data is tracked to show progress. Students are encouraged to take assessments to help them reach benchmarks so they are college and career ready. Instructional coaches work with the most at-risk students to help them improve in specific skills. The study Island program has been purchased and will be used

school-wide as an intervention program for all students needing intervention. Data will be collected and reviewed for progress.

Special education students are offered academic labs that offer specific support for teaching content.

Anderson County Community Education (ACE) Adult Learning Center

Anderson County High School staff with community education instructors. They provide mentoring services for students who are in danger of dropping out of school. ACE also offers JOBS Academy for students interested in gaining skills to be work force ready. Their instructors will take them through the program and help them obtain A NCRC certificate. ACE also works with our students who have dropped out to try to help them obtain a GED. Their staff reaches out to students to get them enrolled, and tutors them through each subject to prepare them for each exam. We are working to extend mentoring from ACE instructors for the APEX Academy students with the goal of keeping them on track for graduation or to get them successfully enrolled in a GED program.

In collaboration with the ACE program, ACHS provides names of at-risk students to participate in the SWAG (Students with A Goal) Program. Students between the ages of 18 and 24 who are within a few credits of graduating and in danger of dropping out, can withdraw from high school, enroll and be assigned a mentor in SWAG, complete the credits, and re-enroll in high school to receive high school diploma rather than a GED. They are mentored at ACHS or at the ACE facility depending on the preference of the students. The students qualify for the monetary incentives that the GED students will receive which is \$100 for obtaining a diploma or GED. Other incentives include:

- \$50 for a positive gain in reading or math
- \$25 for taking WorkKeys of Jobs Academy
- \$100 for getting a job within 3 months of graduating
- \$100 for enrolling in a college within 3 months of graduating

ACE mentors can also help place students in jobs, which their employers will not have to pay but will be funded through SWAG program.

Extended School Service Program

Anderson County High School is working to implement a new ESS program reaching into our community to offer mentoring and homework help for at-risk students. A local church will provide a location in the evening for students to attend. They will be tutored, mentored and fed a snack through the program. Teachers, retired teachers and volunteers will be selected to teach, mentor and offer homework help to Anderson County High School students one night per week.

Narrative 2: National Career Readiness Certificate Holders

Employers Consider NCRC Program

Employers in Anderson County, Kentucky are seeking qualified employees to grow and maintain their business in the Lawrenceburg community. The Work Ready Committee is excited to introduce the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) as a way to identify employees with the verifiable skills that our community businesses are recruiting for and want to retain.

Some of the largest employers in town either use the NCRC or are exploring the concept:

YKK:

YKK was looking for a job-skills assessment system that would help them select, hire, train, develop and retain a high-performance workforce. They were wanting to verify that the employees hired had the soft skills required for the position. They teamed up with the NCRC to help them achieve this mission. Profiles were conducted on "Subject Matter Experts" that worked in the jobs in order to determine the soft skills needed to successfully perform the job. The four areas of concentration were 1. applied mathematics 2. location information 3. reading for information and 4. workplace observation. Once completed, the profile identified how each of these areas related to the essential function of the job. They now have an understanding during the recruiting phase for the jobs of the actual soft skills needed.

Wild Turkey:

Wild Turkey, produced by Campari America, currently employs 154 employees. In 2016, they plan to hire around 10-15 individuals. The hiring process includes the NCRC assessment for all applicants. In order to fill those openings; they plan to use the NCRC to test roughly 40-60 potential candidates for these positions.