

BOARD POLICY

Adopted by Board of Education 8/18/86

CHILDREN AT RISK

I Definition

"Children at Risk" means dropouts and other pupils (K-12) whose school achievement, progress toward graduation, or preparation for employment are in serious jeopardy (potential dropouts) due to one or more of the following: Dropout means anyone who has unexcused absences of 20 consecutive days or who has a truancy pattern which accumulates to 20 in a year.

- one or more years behind their grade level group in reading or mathematic basic skills achievement (K-8)
- three or more credits behind their age/grade level in credits earned for graduation (9-12)
- chronic truancy
- school age parent
- adjudicated delinquent
- personal and/or family drug/alcohol abuse
- family trauma, such as death, divorce, violence, separation, or unemployment
- physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- economically disadvantaged
- chronic disruptive behavior and/or school suspensions

II Need for Children at Risk Program

School success exemplified through high school graduation continues to be the single most important "rite of passage" for personal, career, and life opportunities.

The need to serve children at risk of school and life failure is indisputable. Statistics on both the positive and negative side of

the success ledger unanimously attest to this fact. Earning power, economic stability, personal independence, self-satisfaction and social influence are greatly enhanced by school success.

On the other hand, major societal problems are highlighted by lack of school success. For instance:

- Approximately 75 percent of the people in Wisconsin prisons are high school dropouts.
- Over 80 percent of females and 93 percent of males receiving AFDC assistance failed to complete high school (Michigan, 1982).
- The economic implications of school dropouts are astronomical. For every dollar it would cost to keep a child in school through graduation, society pays over six dollars for maintenance of under-educated adults.
- Lack of school success continues to be a major factor inhibiting economic opportunity among minority cultural groups.
- The unemployment rate of high school dropouts is four times higher than for graduates. Dropouts have the highest unemployment and lowest earnings throughout their lives.
- The National Institute for Drug Abuse estimates that 80 percent of high school dropouts have drug related problems.
- According to data released by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, the failure rate of dropouts in fulfilling their military obligations is twice as high as for graduates. As a result, armed forces recruiters are reluctant to consider dropouts for military service.

II Identification procedures

1. The several offices of the school district will keep complete and thorough records of attendance, including all or part time absence on each day of the school year for every student enrolled. Truancy will thus be identified.

2. The principal and the guidance counselor will monitor all standardized test results and records in order to identify those students who are one or more years behind their grade level (K-8); and those three or more credits behind their age grade level in credits earned for graduation (9-12).
3. The counselors, social worker, and school nurse will attempt to identify school aged parents.
4. We will expect courts and law authorities to identify adjudicated delinquents to us.
5. The counselors and school nurse will attempt to identify students with personal and or family drug/alcohol abuse.
6. The counselors will monitor all class failures and potential failures by requiring failure reports and deficiency reports and keeping records thereof. (9-12)
7. The counselors will semi-annually monitor graduation credits earned and requirements fulfilled by each high school student.
8. The counselors will be alert to family trauma and/or abuse as described under "definition" above.
9. The principal as disciplinarian will keep complete records regarding disruptive behavior and school suspensions.
10. The economically disadvantaged youth will be identified by monitoring free and reduced hot lunch applications.
11. Teachers will be in-serviced and instructed to be alert to any situations described above and to make those responsible aware.
- *12. It is not intended that any one of the conditions above will automatically qualify a student as "At Risk". These are criteria which will be used as guides to identification.
13. Identification will be a joint decision involving counselors, administration, teachers, and parents.

IV Programs

A.. The following programs for children at risk will be provided.

These programs are each and all intended to lead toward graduation. All programs and individual prescriptions will require parental involvement, approval, and cooperation. Since the criteria involved in identifying "At Risk" is multiple and often overlapping (and therefor individual), all identification, and therefor all programs prescribed, must also be individual, like an I.E.P.

B. The programs available at present, listed below, will not be a static list, but are intended as a starter list and can be expanded in any direction as the needs dictate and as the imagination allows. Programs such as these can be original, creative and experimental and must be dynamic, flexible, and adaptable to each individual's unique needs.

C. Once a student is identified as "At Risk" the parent will be notified of the program available. The parent must then request such program or may reject it.

Programs now in operation.

1. Parental involvement in all attendance, behavior, and academic progress problems.
2. Referrals to counseling, both school and community based programs such as Unified Health Services, and others.
3. Providing for alternative or additional classes at area technical institutes.
4. Providing for alternative or additional classes at night school at Pulaski H.S., Shawano H.S. or others.
5. Alternative scheduling of classes outside the normal pattern, structure, or schedule.

6. Reduced student program in terms of number of class hours required each day or in level of intensity - in other words a lighter load during the helping process.
7. Provide for special teacher and/or student tutorial help.
8. Free or reduced priced lunch programs for economically disadvantaged.
9. In-service for teachers concerning "At Risk" children plans and procedures.
10. Work with Dept. of Social Services, in cases of truancy and maintain daily contact with parents when truancy is suspected or known.
11. Have teachers in classes develop alternative assignments and I.E.P.s even if no formal adjustments in schedules are made, once a child is found At Risk.
12. The normal EEN program.
13. Continue and expand the early childhood education as necessary.
14. Develop a plan to improve guidance and counseling services in the high school.
15. Develop special make-up lessons for students who have fallen behind because of non-attendance.
16. Others

V Financing

The board of education will provide for staff time necessary to administrate the At Risk Program outlined herin and will make such other financial committment necessary to implement the programs outlined hereon.

VI Coordinator

Guidance counselors K-12 will be the coordinators.