



**Rankin County School District  
Dropout Prevention Plan 16-17  
MS College & Career Readiness Design Principles  
RCSD School Board Approved 12/14/16**

Design Principle 1: Ready for College & Career: High School Course of Study

1.1: Early Steps - All students and parents are advised about higher level course offerings at their school thru the pre registration process. All students have the opportunity to enroll in AP and DE classes if they meet the criteria for enrollment. All students are encouraged to push themselves beyond basic courses to enhance their ACT scores and also to enhance learning experiences and deepen knowledge through higher order thinking skills utilized in dual credit, AP and advanced courses.

1.2: Growing Innovations - Academic assistance is available to all students during specific times of the day that vary by building. Before and after school are options for academic support as well as specific blocks of time during the school day allotted for remediation and extra supports. Students identified through data as needing support through the academic tier process are given extra time with an instructor during the day to receive academic supports. By using data to identify students who need extra academic supports before it is too late, students are college or career ready upon graduation.

### Design Principle 1: Ready for College & Career: College Ready Skills

1.3: Growing Innovations - Students are provided opportunities to practice college and career ready skills through presentations (senior project), work based learning classes, etc. their understanding and desire to be college and career ready. Students are also exposed to various careers and colleges through events such as the Hinds CC Career Expo partnership with Hinds and RCSD and the RCSD College Fair. Also, students are able to practice these skills through our academy courses and hands on type internships and work based learning experiences.

1.4: Growing Innovations - Students learn to make effective and efficient use of college and career resources through frequent meetings with their school counselor and using programs on a regular basis such as "Career Cruising". In extra mini enrichment periods at some schools there are lessons taught on college entrance ACT scores and scholarships and various career opportunities.

### Design Principle 1: Ready for College & Career: College Credit

1.5: Growing Innovations - RCSD uses Career Cruising as a monitoring system for the district. All students are required to complete a four/five year plan- this program is used to help students complete college and career goals. Career Cruising is monitored throughout the school year and is updated each year with the student and counselor. The course plans created are well defined and updated each year.

1.6: Early Steps - Students that meet the ACT requirements set forth by Hinds CC for dual credit enrollment are highly encouraged to enroll in college classes taught on each high school campus.

### Design Principle 1: Ready for College & Career: College Going Culture

1.7: Growing Innovations - Each campus offers multiple college campus visits during the school year (two-year and four-year) to all juniors and seniors. Each student as the opportunity for a "college day" to explore options offered to them at the college of their choice. All 11th and 12th grade students attend the RCSD College Fair for exposure to many local, state and national colleges/universities.

1.8: Growing Innovations - Each campus offers students and families support through the FAFSA process by having local agencies (Get2College, Hinds CC), school counselors, school websites where information is shared and can be accessed. Parents have the opportunity to attend FAFSA days at their student's high school where people from agencies such as Get 2 College assist them in filling out the FAFSA and provide financial aid advice one on one.

1.9: New Paradigms - RCSD pays for all freshman in the district to take the PSAT in October and pays for all Juniors to take the ACT in April. Every student is offered the opportunity to take

the ACT/SAT, PSAT/Aspire in sequence and on time. Each campus provides the opportunity for students to prepare for these tests by offering ACT/PSAT/SAT Preparatory classes during the school day. ACT preparatory workshops are offered throughout the district by the district ACT/PSAT Coordinator.

1.10: Growing Innovations - Every student completes a 4 year plan through Career Cruising, which begins in 7th grade and ends at 12th grade, where they plan their high school course of study, with the ultimate objective being the decision to pursue college at the community college level or at the university level. Students are supported daily by teachers, counselors and administrators who set a college-going culture through everyday experiences in our district (i.e. all seniors are transported to local college fair, all 8th graders are transported to local career fair, college representatives are visible and active in each high school.)

1.11: Growing Innovations - Students take required courses where the focus is on investigating colleges and careers based on their interests. Students meet with mentors that give them real-world knowledge of the career(s) that they are interested in pursuing. The district has created a culture where college and careers are the likely next step after high school.

#### Design Principle 2: Require Powerful Teaching & Learning: Curriculum

2.1: Growing Innovation - Rankin County School District Teachers plan instruction around “big ideas” that incorporate multiple standards and 21st century skills. The following are examples:

- Wellness - entire unit based on health incorporating technology into lessons as well as community involvement (i.e. “Move to Learn” & Community Helper assemblies).
- Leadership, Accountability & Social Responsibility - PBIS and behavioral systems are introduced at the beginning of the year and expectations are upheld throughout the year; students have the ability to brainstorm, research and provide input for activities based upon these initiatives.
- Communication & Collaboration - Guidance classes are offered at each elementary school and provide problem solving opportunities in which students interact together thus promoting teamwork, cooperation, and skills needed for the future. General assemblies are conducted for the middle and high schools on topics of social responsibility and ethics. Career Cruising is implemented with middle and high school students to promote all of the skills mentioned.

2.2: Growing Innovation - Rankin County School District teachers relate the content to other disciplines:

Cross disciplines – enrichment teachers integrate ideas from classroom teachers to help promote understanding of various units and concept; in turn, classroom teachers incorporate music, reading, physical movement, and counseling topics within their classrooms when appropriate to support a comprehensive educational environment.

Global awareness – encouraged by all educators within each school in order to make connections, master standards, and provide students opportunities to be an integral part of the ever-changing global society in which they live (e.g. Native Americans, rainforests, and natural disaster.)

2.3 Growing Innovation - Teachers provide opportunities for students to share ambitions, as well as integrating dress-up days, classroom guest speakers, and assemblies. This promotes early exploration of future opportunities. Counselors impart information regarding various colleges and lessons geared towards responsibilities and special talents desired in various fields. Beginning in grade 6 all students have opportunity to career exploration through Career Cruising. In elementary schools, various aspects of career exploration are embedded in units that are taught at each grade level.

#### Design Principle 2: Require Powerful Teaching & Learning: Instruction

2.4: Growing Innovation - Teachers create learning groups within the classroom that provide for varied instruction in the subjects of reading, language arts, and mathematics. Students are paired with other individuals in order to enhance learning within the classroom from one another, as well as teacher-led instruction. Teachers and counselors, along with administrators create individual student plans through the TST process and provide students the opportunity to develop skills with helpful accommodations promoting success.

2.5: Early Steps - Teachers provide technology during instruction for research opportunities such as: I-pads and computers, as well as for basic learning skills with Smart-boards and document cameras. The district provides laptops to all students in grades 7-11 and lessons are integrated and delivered through Canvas.

2.6: Growing Innovation - Teachers are trained in teaching students to use the problem solving method through multiple professional developments throughout the school year. Teachers also participate in PLC's at the building level to examine the school wide design process and use it to take on problems that arise.

2.7: Growing Innovations - At each level of learning from elementary to high school. teachers organize learning teams deliberately and teach students how to create and manage their own teams. This begins at a young age and is practiced throughout the curriculum across years.

2.8: Growing Innovations - Teachers teach students how to communicate effectively with each other and set up classroom practices that require them to do so. Collaboration and discussion among students are encouraged and expected. Teachers teach the students to "turn and talk" during each lesson in Reading Writing/Workshops. Teachers teach and model effective communication skills and teach students critical thinking skills and model collaboration and discussion techniques such as Socratic circles and panel discussions.

2.9: Growing Innovations - Teachers facilitate students' reading, writing, thinking, and talking daily to develop a deep understanding of core academic concepts. Teachers teach the students to "turn and talk" during each lesson in Reading Writing/Workshops. Effective communication skills are modeled and practiced at each grade level and expected from students. By facilitating student's reading, writing, talking and thinking daily, students develop a deeper understanding of core academic concepts.

#### Design Principle 2: Require Powerful Teaching & Learning: Assessment

2.10: Growing Innovations - Teachers routinely share the rubrics with students that clearly communicate meaningful learning outcomes and criteria for success. Teachers monitor progress throughout each lesson. Teachers focus on the percentage of incorrect standards and break down data from common and district assessments to ensure students' success. By sharing rubrics in this way and making changes to them as necessary, two way communication between learners and teachers is being practiced and knowledge is being gained.

2.11: Growing Innovation - Teachers employ varied assessment strategies that elicit student thinking related to learning outcomes. Teachers have a more complete understanding of students' knowledge and skills. Teachers use Mastery Connect to help elicit student thinking related to learning outcomes. Also used are a wide variety of assessment tools and data to make it easier for teachers to assess student understanding and mastery of skills.

2.12: Early Steps/Growing Innovation - Teachers provide instructional interventions based on data from assessments. Teachers provide Tier II and Tier III interventions for students who do not master skills in math and reading. Timely and targeted opportunities for students to learn are afforded to students and teachers collaborate on data gathered from assessments.

2.13: Early Steps - Teachers regularly provide feedback to students and parents regarding progress on specific learning outcomes. Parents have access to Powerschool Parent Portal where they can access student grades at anytime. Progress reports and Report Cards are issued to parents every four and nine weeks. Teachers use remind 101 accounts and updated websites to provide information to parents and students. Parents can also sign up for Canvas access to monitor student progress and view teacher syllabus, etc.

#### Design Principle 3: Personalization: Affective (Personal/Social) & Academic Support

3.1: Growing Innovation - High schools have advisory blocks that are shorter than regular courses that serve as advisory blocks such for college and career planning and state & national testing. Junior high students have advisory teams through ICT I, ICT II, and STEM. Counselors visit advisory blocks as well as prepare lessons that can be delivered by the regular advisory teacher to assist the students with goal setting, long range plans and college and career.

3.2: Early Steps - Students have advisors in homeroom block and high school small group advisories such as STAR, etc. These groups meet two times per week. The teachers work with

students during the spring semester for pre registration and also by using the career exploration program “Career Cruising”. Counselors are assigned to where they are with the same “group” of students throughout their education experience in a particular building. This enhances relationships between families and students and their school counselor so the counselor acts as a true advisor.

3.3: Growing Innovation - Students have access to Edgenuity, MVPS, Method Test Prep thru Career Cruising, and correspondence courses from state universities.

3.4: Growing Innovation- Some academic supports are in place such as summer bridge program and tutoring session times available before and after school. After-school tutoring in the elementary grades is provided. Students identified as needing extra academic supports are scheduled in a course during the day where they can receive the interventions needed to help them be successful.

3.5: New Paradigms - Students in grades 6-12 have accounts with Career Cruising that enables them to explore their career interests and future ready skills. Students are also afforded opportunities through Work Based Learning and academy opportunities to be exposed to real world experiences and obtain knowledge and skill beyond the classroom.

### Design Principle 3: Personalization: Adult/Student Relationships

3.6: Early Steps - Welcome letters are on school websites and social media messages are sent to welcome students and parents to the year. Orientations and back to school nights are held in the first few weeks of the school year. Parent conference days and opportunities are presented throughout the year also.

3.7: Growing Innovation- Teachers meet weekly by grade level or department to discuss needs and progress of students. Counselors have advisory councils that involve parents, students, community members and faculty members to set goals and talk about plans for the departments. Also, counselors have annual agreements that they sign with their principal to ensure that school goals and vision are aligned with guidance department goals and vision.

3.8: Early Steps - Students are assigned a homeroom and in high schools an advisory block. Students meet with their advisor to review grades and receive instruction on goal setting, standardized test taking, college and career and long range plans.

3.9: Early Steps - Through the yearly needs assessments conducted by counselors, we can see that the majority of students feel known, respected, and cared for by the adults in their school.

3.10: Early Steps - School newsletters are provided in Spanish and English versions. Elementary School Counselors are provided through Resources for Educators counseling and guidance newsletters electronically in Spanish and English. Administrators and Counselors use

the school webpage to deliver information to their audience daily. RCSD webpage is also available to be translated in other languages.

#### Design Principle 4: Redefine Professionalism: Collaborative Work Orientation

4.1: Growing innovations: Teachers participate in benchmarking /observing their peers and give and receive feedback in order to become better instructors, revise instruction and change strategies if necessary. M-STAR is used to give teachers feedback and keep them accountable for classroom management and good instruction.

4.2: New Paradigms: Staff regularly participates and are engaged in PLC's and professional development to enhance their teaching and instruction through the support and guidance of peers. Sharing of lessons and work are also beneficial to improving instruction. Data is analyzed and used to drive instruction.

4.3: New Paradigms- Staff members hold each their departments and peers accountable for improving student learning and sharing best practice with each other, giving and receiving feedback from benchmarking and participate in PLC's and PD to enhance their instruction.

4.4: Growing Innovations: When new hires are made, administrators collaborate with teachers and departments on interviewing and hiring people who will be the "best fit" for the school and align with the school's mission and vision.

#### Design Principle 4: Redefine Professionalism: Shared Responsibility & Collaborative Decision Making

4.5: Growing innovations: Teachers are responsible for advisory classes that meet several times each week and examine college and career options through the computer program "Career Cruising". Also, students receive guided practice on ACT testing during advisory block along with subject area testing practice and pre-registration and course information for the next school year. Lessons are also taught on importance of education on future salaries, etc.

4.6: New Paradigms: Student groups and classes participate in various activities throughout the year to ensure community engagement and contribute to citizenship. From programs that involve retired military persons, grandparent and community mentors, students performing volunteer service thru various organizations to clubs sponsoring families to adopt and welcoming new students, our students do many things to encourage students to become better citizens.

4.7: Growing Innovations: Through the MTSS, teachers create many "out of the box" instructional practices to engage and help with the challenging students in their classrooms. Modifying instruction, varying assignments and creating a behavior plan are examples of instructional practices teachers may use with a challenging student..

4.8: Growing Innovations: Staff members are provided various channels to be able to give input on school decisions. Some schools do things such as surveys or Google forms while others have active discussions in faculty meetings and PLC's to achieve this goal.

#### Design Principle 4: Redefine Professionalism: Sustainability

4.9: Early Steps: Staff members share lessons and resources with one another and provide feedback and advice to one another after benchmarking. Teachers routinely meet and share on "best practice". Mentor teachers actively assist new hires on lessons and resources.

4.10: Growing Innovations: PLC's are provided for staff to participate in to enhance teaching and share best practices with one another. Feedback is key to these. Data is reviewed and lessons and objectives are planned around student achievement and the critical question of what do we want students to learn?

4.11: Growing Innovations: Through advisory council meetings the faculty/staff feels ownership in a wide array of decisions made and speak confidently to stakeholders in the community and school regarding these decisions. By collaboration staff/faculty are able to meet the goals of the school's mission and vision statements. Through participating in and holding various "advisory councils" and "Leadership team meetings, staff feel ownership and are stakeholders in the decision making process.

4.12: Early Steps: Our schools use tools such as Google drive and Canvas to easily disseminate resources and materials received at trainings and professional developments. It is also used to share lessons and classroom resources by teachers and counselors.

#### Design Principle 4: Redefine Professionalism: Professional Inquiry

4.13: Growing Innovations: National standards and research based tools are used by teachers and monitored and reviewed by administrators to help enhance best practice in the classroom and address deficiencies through feedback and collaboration. Teachers regularly attend PLC's and professional development opportunities to better their instructional practice and reach a wide variety of learning styles and needs in their classrooms.

#### Design Principle 5: Leadership: Shared Mission & Vision

5.1: Growing Innovations- Staff members participate in professional development where common vision and mission are established. Through regular meetings and collaboration, the teachers promote the vision and mission in classrooms and create positive learning environments that foster the vision and mission.



### Design Principle 5: Leadership: Change Agent

5.2: Growing Innovations- Leadership teams meet on a regular basis within school buildings. In these meetings, teachers are encouraged to collaborate with school principals in solutions and risk taking to meet needs of all students and think of creative ways to reach at risk students. Also data is analyzed and current trends and “issues” in the school are addressed.

5.3: New Paradigms- Principals take part in a district advisory team and various state commissions or committees. They then bring the knowledge they acquire from around the state back to our district and implement best practice in our district.

5.4: New Paradigms- RCSD offers two leadership enhancement and development programs for staff, Active Lead and Aspiring Lead. Teachers can participate in various leadership teams at the school and district level. Students have numerous opportunities to build leadership skills including but not limited to, student government, JROTC, and other clubs and organizations.

### Design Principle 5: Leadership: Focus on Powerful Teaching & Learning

5.5: Growing Innovations - Schools schedule regular PLC's, faculty meetings, data meetings, leadership team meetings, and growth model debriefings. Teachers are responsible for reading assignments in a district wide book study based on best practice in classroom instruction and teaching.

5.6: New Paradigms - Staff members participate in professional learning communities and professional development activities. Through department/ grade level meetings and PLC's, teachers hold each other accountable for improving practice and professional learning.

5.7: Growing Innovations - School leaders & teachers collect and analyze data, analyze summative assessments, and schedule growth debriefings. Each school has a data plan that is submitted to the county office to explain how they will use and analyze data within their particular building to improve student achievement. Teachers are trained on how to analyze data and how to use it effectively in instruction.

5.8: Growing Innovations - Principals facilitate monthly PLC meetings and RCSD curriculum specific professional development. Principals are instructional leaders in their buildings and are responsible for coaching staff and implementing new programs and curriculums.

### Design Principle 5: Leadership: Culture of High Expectations

5.9: Growing Innovations - The principal holds staff accountable for ensuring the success of each student through weekly data meetings and progress reports. Departments within the school regularly meet and collaborate together to look at at risk students and what can be done to help them grow.

5.10: Growing Innovations - Teachers are held accountable for the full engagement and implementation of a rigorous and challenging learning environment. Teachers and principals collaborate frequently with the principal being the instructional leader in the school. The principal demonstrates evidence of high expectations for all staff that include routine conversations with staff regarding school standards for rigorous and challenging learning environments for all students through M-STAR (Mississippi Statewide Teacher Appraisal Rubric).

#### Design Principle 5: Leadership: Shared Leadership

5.11: Early Steps - Staff have a variety of ways to give input on decisions that are appropriate for staff to be a part of making. Principals ensure when using groups to make decisions that a wide variety of diversity is incorporated in the makeup of the decision-making group of stakeholders.

5.12: Growing Innovations - The principal actively encourages teacher leadership through traditional school-based leadership opportunities, including department/grade level leaders, school improvement team, etc. - The department heads are responsible for leading weekly meetings with their peers and teachers are encouraged to participate in leadership opportunities beyond the school walls. The principal promotes staff participation in district and external leadership opportunities and enables staff to lead school-based conversations about those experiences. - MDE (Mississippi Department of Education) Committees and SREB (Southern Regional Educational Board) district committees.

#### Design Principle 5: Leadership: Collaborative Work Environment

5.13: Early Steps - Through regularly scheduled PTO meetings and events such as back to school nights and pre-registration nights, advisory blocks and class meetings, the staff and administration proactively develops relationships with students, families, and community partners. Schools are encouraged to nominate and participate in student and parent of the month programs, and sponsor clubs and other organizations.

5.14: Early Steps - Teachers are able to benchmark with peers in their building and give and receive feedback on instructional practices. Staff share instructional practices, lessons learned, and current challenges with peers during common planning opportunities through PLC (Professional Learning Community), morning zero block, common planning blocks, monthly book studies, weekly/monthly unit planning, ELA (English/Language Arts) assessment analysis, and Math assessment analysis.

#### Design Principle 6: Purposeful Design: Autonomous Governance

6.1: Growing Innovations - Weekly administrative meetings with internal stakeholders are scheduled in each school. Principals meet monthly to discuss policies, curriculum & instruction, and praises for staff on the administrative level. On the school level, many schools have

leadership teams involving department heads and other key leaders within the school to talk about policies and procedures and curriculum and instruction issues.

6.2: Beginning - Principals collaborate together on local school budgets. Our budgets are prepared at the district level and given to schools. Counselors discuss budget with their local building principal during the writing of the annual agreement each year. Various organizations within the school community, such as PTO and private foundations designed to raise educational funds, will supplement the school's budgets as needs arise throughout the year.

6.3: Early Steps- Our schools actively advertise through social media outlets and our school and district websites the individual schools themes and our district strategic plan summary. In pre-registration season in the spring of each year, students who will be in high school the next year are given the opportunity to tour the various programs available at their local high school through either a Pre-Registration night or a day in which 8th graders are brought to the high school to tour the programs available. In addition to this, 9th graders are taken to tour the Pearl branch of Hinds CC Rankin to tour the Career and Technical Center to view the programs available there.

6.4: Growing Innovations - Principals have the discretion to allow staff to attend professional development events. District office is involved in identifying who will attend professional development from each building and planning and designing the district level professional developments to be beneficial to staff.

6.5: Growing Innovations - Each RCSD school has a schedule that is designed for that school's individual needs. Principals regularly will adjust the timing within the school day to meet the needs of students and faculty such as state test review days, etc. Teachers and staff are regularly consulted over what changes would be best for the school and benefit students the most.

#### Design Principle 6: Purposeful Design: School/Program Sustainability

6.6: New Paradigms - Advisory Councils are created by counselors and administrators and promoted by administration at each school and the superintendent on the district level. RCSD partners with Hinds CC and local businesses to promote and co-sponsor an annual Career Expo in which all 8th graders attend to see various corporations and careers that are available in our county.

6.7: New Paradigms - Our district theme is "Great to Best" and we strive to achieve this goal with our articulation agreement with Hinds Community College and offer dual credit in the secondary setting in every high school within the district. Also we offer a wide variety of AP courses. We have a district Strategic Plan Summary that our superintendent has made very public and placed posters in all local schools to make the community aware of district goals, vision, mission, theme, etc.

6.8: New Paradigms - Partners in Education is implemented with all school zones and honored through multimedia advertising and support. PIE robustly supports our school programs by offering fundraising opportunities for our programs. RCSD communicates clearly what specific budgets are and provides above adequate funds to ensure program sustainability.

Design Principle 6: Purposeful Design: Facilities & Resources

6.9: Growing Innovations - Adequate space in buildings provides the ability to collaborate. Staffing supports the school and district model. Technology is readily available to all staff and students. All students in grades 7-11 are provided a Macbook (\$50 deposit) and are able to utilize Canvas and other online learning management systems.

Design Principle 6: Purposeful Design: Student Recruitment & Selection (If applicable)

6.10, 11, and 12: These do not apply to us.

Design Principle 6: Purposeful Design: Collaborative Work Orientation

6.13 Growing Innovations - Staff meets and collaborates with building level peers and have common planning time in many of our schools in order to enhance cross curricular and vertical development. Staff also attend regularly district training and professional developments.