

PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK/DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

Code **IHBC** *Issued* **11/07**

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for district programs for at-risk/disadvantaged students.

The board is concerned with the number of students at risk for being poorly prepared for the next level of study or for dropping out of school. The board is also concerned with providing a learning environment conducive to keeping all students in school. Therefore, the board endorses the implementation in the high schools of a model program geared to motivating students in danger of dropping out of school.

A student at risk of dropping out of school is any student who, because of his/her individual needs, requires temporary or ongoing intervention in order to achieve in school and to graduate with meaningful options for his/her future.

The district will utilize specific objective criteria to identify students falling into this category.

- A review of appropriate assessments in order to diagnose the academic difficulties of students (generally a grade point ratio of 2.0 or lower on a 4.0 scale in core academic areas) and to select appropriate short and long-term interventions. Careful consideration should be given to students demonstrating declining academic performance.
- Consideration of specific behaviors and characteristics as indicators, predictors and barriers in identifying at-risk students (e.g., being over-age for their grade level, working an excessive number of hours, being a single parent, having a history of discipline problems, exhibiting limited proficiency in the English language).

Each high school will implement an at-risk student model, initiative or program from the approved state department of education list or submit a specific alternative model, comprehensive initiative or multi-faceted program it wants to use for approval. Any newly-developed model presented by the district and/or school for approval must contain evidence that the model is centered on research-based dropout prevention strategies.

The district will work with the state department of education to ensure that students are being properly identified and provided timely, appropriate guidance and assistance and that no group is disproportionately represented.

The high school will annually evaluate its drop-out prevention model, initiative and/or program using, at a minimum, the following criteria to ensure the program is providing students an opportunity to graduate with a high school diploma.

- an identification process including, where appropriate, the number of at-risk students and the specific risk factors
- extent of parental involvement
- number of students served
- formative assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the process
- qualitative assessment of desired outcomes or performance criteria as established by the school

The district and the schools annually will provide the appropriate data to meet reporting requirements of the state department of education.

Cf. IG, IGCA, IHAK, IHAQ, IHCA, IKF, JLD, KB

Adopted 4/12/05; Revised 11/13/07

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Legal references:

- A. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:
 - 1. Section 59-59-150 - South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act; regulations for identifying at-risk students; model programs.

- B. State Board of Education Regulations:
 - 1. R43-205 - Administrative and professional personnel qualifications, duties and workloads.
 - 2. R43-234 - Defined program, grades 9-12.
 - 3. R-43-274.1 - At-risk students.

- C. South Carolina State Department of Education:
 - 1. South Carolina Education and Economic Development Act Guidelines (2006).