

**Shelby County School District  
Building Students for Life-Long Success**

**D.A.R.E.  
(Discipline, Attendance, Registration & Enrollment)**

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***Key words:*** Attendance, Discipline, Registration and Enrollment

**Funding Sources:**

Student Equity Enrollment and Discipline Budget

**Project Cost and Budget Narrative:**

Registration Kick-Off Block Party	\$40,000.00
Food Trucks	\$8,000.00
Banners	\$600.00
T-Shirts	\$570.00
Wristbands	\$630.00
Backpacks	\$560.00
Visors	\$740.00
Fade Laundry Pens	\$230.00
Pencils/Pens	\$250.00
Sanitizers	<u>\$260.00</u>
Total	\$51,840.00

**Project Description:**

Building Students for Life-Long Success was focused on increasing attendance, decreasing discipline and increasing student enrollment across the district. We provided extensive training sessions to impact each of these areas. The focus on increasing attendance, decreasing exclusionary consequences and increasing student enrollment within the district has contributed immensely in reducing the number of dropouts within Shelby County Schools. Further, the district implemented additional system-wide trainings related to dropout prevention at the Technology Training Center (TTC), Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA), Board of Education, and the Central Office at Grays Creek. Furthermore, district staff made school visits to train staff during faculty meetings and District Learning Days (DLD). In addition, the strategies presented to school and district level administrators, and other staff at the SEED Summer Academy were implemented and this impacted the district’s efforts tremendously. It resulted in the increase of student attendance, reduction of student discipline, increase in student enrollment, and reduction of dropout rates district-wide.

**Staffing Pattern:**

School Administrators and Clerical Staff at Shelby County School District: Principals, Assistant Principals, Vice-Principals, Directors, Managers, Advisors, Analysts, Specialists, Associates, Dean of Students, Record Secretaries, School Counselors, Behavioral Specialists, Social Workers and Community Stakeholders.

**Population Served:**

- 80 middle and high school students, grades 6-12
- 10% Asian
- 55% Black
- 20% Hispanic
- 5% Multi-Racial
- 10% White

**Project Origination:**

The project began due to low enrollment, decreasing graduation and attendance rates. The

enrollment numbers had dropped dramatically due to an influx of private and charter schools in the local area. Students were being suspended, enrolling in Job Corp options, getting tired of attending school, and becoming 18 years old while enrolled. These factors led to the decrease in graduation rate. Attendance is one of the major factors because, without students attending school, it hurts the district and prevents students from being successful. Students, school staff and administrators, district leaders and stakeholders were involved in the conversations. Issues were addressed, solutions were presented and attainable goals were developed. Our department was the lead in tackling this task. We have worked tirelessly to reach the goals set as a district. We are currently working toward achieving all goals set.

Shelby County School District is preparing all students for success in learning, leadership, and life. Our District will be the premier school district attracting a diverse student population and effective teachers, leaders, and staff all committed to excellence. To reach these goals, SCS has placed a strong emphasis in five high-leverage areas: early literacy, improvement of post-secondary readiness, developing strong teachers, leaders and support staff, expanding high quality school options, and working closely with families and community partners to support schools. SCS partners with almost 3,900 volunteers and 1,100 total school adopters and community partners to help impact student achievement.

#### **Issues Addressed:**

The goal is to have school staff and others motivate and encourage students regarding the significance of attending school, and how their future plans are tied to being present and active during the school daily. The use of Reset Rooms and progressive discipline has played a significant role in decreasing the discipline rate and keeping students in schools. Additionally, properly training school staff that handle enrollment & registration is paramount to the district's dropout prevention efforts. When school staff are more prepared to use fair and accurate methods of enrollment and registration for students from a variety of backgrounds, they provide opportunities for parents to experience comfort during the process of registering their children in school. Parents' experiences during the registration affects students' overall attendance in school, truancy, homeless student enrollment, and dropout rates of students. When school administrators and staff are properly trained in the enrollment and registration process, they adequately meet the needs of students and their parents and ultimately the registration process becomes less challenging for them and the transition in schools is easier for the students.

#### **Desired Outcomes and Measurable Objectives:**

Graduate ready workforce and post-secondary readiness for all students. The community and faith-based played a major role in meeting these outcomes. The objectives were:

- To provide extensive training to all staff on attendance, discipline and registration
- To provide access to wrap around services from vendors and community partners to support student attendance and show gains in attendance data.
- To provide strategies to better assist parents in monitoring their child's progress and achievement

#### **Strategies and/or Interventions of the Project:**

- Block Parties
- School Recognition Pop up Parties
- Parent Support Meetings

- Discipline Implementation Meetings
- Community and Faith-Based Events
- Registration Events with Truancy
- Calling No Shows
- Online registration for returning students
- Holding registration sessions at HUD Office, Salvation Army, Juvenile Court, and a Homeless Convention

**Results (Outcomes and Achievements):**

As a result of this project, participants reported the following:

- More schools inquired on how their students could receive incentives
- Increased district awareness of the importance of promoting the best from students
- Established a need to band together as a community to work toward the same goal for achievement
- Identified resources available to impact graduation rate and prevent dropouts
- Increased numbers of students enrolled on the first day of school
- Enrolled groups of students that were highly at risk to dropout

**Project Timeline:**

An attendance taskforce, cohort meetings, EDC meeting, was formed with Officials, Analyst, Board Commissioners and other district staff. The first attendance taskforce meeting was held on August 28, 2018. A Block Party was held on August 4, 2018. The Collaborative Conclave was held on January 9, 2019 with meetings. The EDC meeting was held on January 30, 2019. Annual SEED Summer Academy was held on July 15 & 16, 2019. School Faculty Meetings and District Learning Days varied.

**Outcomes Related to School Completion, Dropout Prevention, and/or Graduation Rates:**

- Students meeting appropriate graduation guidelines (graduating with their cohorts).
- Improved student attendance (2% increase in student attendance)
- Trouble free registration process for families
- Implemented strategies/objectives to deter dropouts among middle and high school students
- Peer support that keeps students accountable and on task to meet graduation requirements
- Decrease in student discipline (2.6% decrease in exclusionary consequences)
- New student registration increased by 1,363 students

**Special Conditions, Expertise, and/or Skills Required to Carry Out Project:**

As colleagues who implement this work daily, we were aware and acknowledged the needs of our students. Additionally, we have the expertise in attendance, discipline, registration/enrollment, and dropout prevention to make this project a success. We have met the requirements through professional development and collaborating as a team. We thrive on working with students, parents and other stakeholders.

**Current Status of Project:**

This project is on-going. During our Annual Leadership Conglomeration, our team members presented information related to the project to participants at the training. Also, our team was

invited to charter schools to conduct trainings related to the dropout prevention project. As a result of the project our attendance, discipline, and enrollment numbers have improved.

**Role in Project as a NDPS Certification Program Participant:**

I serve as an Enrollment Associate helping with gathering information on enrollment/registration strategies and how to better assist and improve our process for SCS students & families.

**Lessons Learned:**

- Our students will benefit more when we work together as a district

**Advice for Dropout Prevention Practitioners about the Project:**

- Provide guidance to ESL parents and community regarding the significance of school preparedness and attendance