



NEWS RELEASE

January 15, 2014

JENNINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT RECLAIMS DROP OUTS AND GETS STUDENTS ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Jennings is Working to Have as Many Students as Possible Graduate from High School and Become Enrolled in a Career or a Postsecondary School by Creatively Reclaiming Drop Outs

(JENNINGS, MO) Jennings is committed to investing in improving the lives of the students served. Recognizing that many of the students in Jennings remain as residents, Jennings has taken a hands-on approach to helping every student become successful future Jennings residents who will contribute to the community. "Increasing educational opportunities leads to inspiring life-long learners and it will be a vehicle to close the income gap," shared the superintendent, Dr. Tiffany Anderson.

Mr. Herman Harris who has taught in Jennings for over a decade was selected by the superintendent to serve as the alternative school administrator. "Every student is different and at the alternative center, we work to help each student find a path for success in school." Jennings has transformed what used to be an alternative school serving primarily disruptive students to a peaceful and academically challenging alternative school that provides small classrooms, individual attention, technology-based lessons and a variety of programs that lead to graduating from high school. To make this program a success, staff and administrators in Jennings are doing home visits and meeting with families wherever they need to meet. The restructured alternative program includes the offerings below within one building:

Night School - Serving students who needed after school tutoring or who need to make up courses they were unsuccessful with in high school.

Credit Recovery - The Credit Recovery Program blends face-to-face and online learning. The program provides students a structured means to recover credit in order to graduate.

Missouri Options - Missouri Options is a program designed for a specific group of students who have the ability to meet regular high school graduation requirements, but have fallen behind in the accumulation of credits. The program represents an alternative route to high school graduation.

JETS In-School Suspension - A structured supervised program for students in lieu of an unsupervised, unstructured out of school suspension. Students complete courses from their home school.

Community Service - Students serve the Jennings community through the school district-operated food bank.

District officials recognize that the lack of education is a predictor for poverty and crime. They are working to interrupt the cycle that perpetuates generational poverty by reclaiming drop outs and giving students who need a different structure a non-traditional academic setting to work within. Jennings is still learning what works best but they have found that so far, the program is a success.

In 2013, Jennings had their first summer graduation as a result of the new structure for the alternative program and district officials are planning the summer graduation for 2014 at this time. While it may take students an additional year in some cases to graduate due to a student being behind, the district's five-year graduation rate is now at 92%. Additionally, Jennings earned 100% of the graduation-related accreditation points.

The goal of the Jennings School District is to prevent as many students as possible from dropping out and to eventually have 100% of students graduate and move on to postsecondary schools. Dr. Anderson shared, "Collectively we succeed and when a community thrives, its schools also thrive and vice versa. We must support the community to effectively serve the community."

For more information contact:

Jennings School District Superintendent's Office

2559 Dorwood Drive • Jennings, MO 63136 • Phone: (314) 653-8003 • Fax: (314) 653-8030