

2023 - 2024

**Rebel Family
United We Grow**

**SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT
PLAN**

Superintendent: Mr. Casey Hall

Principal: Dr. Jerry McKim

Assistant Principal/Athletic Director: Mr. Chris Bell

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Mission Statement

South Newton High School provides opportunities for all of our learners to achieve a successful future.

School Vision Statement

South Newton High School will strive to become an exemplary learning community that supports student academic achievement through meaningful academic instruction. We will address the needs of all learners and strive to create a differentiated learning environment in which ALL students are capable of becoming productive citizens.

Belief Statements

1. We believe that all students deserve to be surrounded by a structured environment where adults not only hold high expectations through rigorous curriculum & engaging instruction for every student but also clearly define those expectations to every student.
2. We believe that all students deserve a vast array of options for the future.
3. We believe that all students deserve sound educational and career guidance so they can develop meaningful educational and career goals.
4. We believe that all students deserve career pathways that will lead them to their personal educational and career goals.
5. Parents, students, educators, school board, and the entire community are responsible for implementing and achieving the school's goals.
6. A safe and comfortable environment along with mutual respect promotes student learning.

Corporation Mission Statement

The mission of the South Newton School Corporation is to educate and empower children, youth and adults for full participation in a rapidly changing society and to build, sustain and extend a learning community which improves the quality of life for all

members of the Corporation, regardless of race, gender, national origin, disability, or socioeconomic level.

Technology Vision

All South Newton technology stakeholders will integrate appropriate technology to enable them to succeed in their educational and career goals.

Accreditation

South Newton High School is accredited by the Indiana Department of Education

School Improvement Committee Members

Cheryl Link
Angela Vena
Brandy Pitstick
Jennifer Kindig
Jerry McKim

Parent Committee Members

Jennifer Carlson
Andrea Standish
Candice Krug

Awards

South Newton High School was recognized for our hard work by receiving a 4-Star rating in 2014, based on 2012/2013 data by the Indiana Department of Education. This is a great accomplishment by our students, staff and community.

In addition, South Newton High School was recognized by US News and World Report and received a bronze award rating based on information from 2011/2012 data. We are extremely proud of this award. In 2017, US News and World Report ranked South Newton High School #34 in the state (silver rating.) More recently, in 2020, South Newton High School was ranked as one of the best high schools nationally.

The high school counseling department was awarded the Indiana Gold Star Counseling Award in 2015 as well as receiving the nation's highest recognition, the American School Counselor Association's Recognized ASCA Model Program or RAMP Award. These awards are based on delivering a comprehensive school counseling, data-driven school counseling program. Dedication and hard work have made all these

awards possible. In looking back, this is the first time these awards have been presented to South Newton High School.

In March, 2015, South Newton High School received along with North Newton High School a CTE grant from the State of Indiana for around \$454,000.00. We concentrated on three CTE areas: Precision Farming, Aquaculture, and AgriTourism (North Newton only.) Tractors with GPS capability, drones, PLTW equipment along with Kubota's with GPS equipment were purchased. Students took ownership of these innovative items and have worked very diligently to improve their knowledge in these areas. Because of this "cutting edge" technology in a high school, several news and magazine articles have been written giving South Newton Ag Department a lot of exposure. This class involves a cross-curricular merging of Agriculture and Technology (Project Lead the Way.)

Farmers Market – In 2016 a teacher from Agriculture, Family and consumer Sciences and Special Education, sat down and discussed concerns about being able to best meet the needs of some of our lower functioning special education students who would be joining us as freshmen the following school year. We all had different perspectives and ideas on how we could help our students achieve success in the classroom while developing skills that would prepare them for future employment.

The discussion resulted in a plan and commitment to developing a cross-curricular academic program that would be all-inclusive and engage all students, despite ability level, in hands-on learning across all subject areas. We developed this hands-on program to support the needs of many of our students in the development of independent living skills, such as cooking, household chores, finances, and any other skills necessary to live semi-independently or independently in their homes and communities after graduation.

Many of our students are not college bound, so we felt we must provide opportunities to prepare them to be ready for the general workforce. We felt this program would aid in the development of many life-long skills that would help our students become productive members of society.

This program received a \$2,000.00 grant from Whole Kids Foundation, a \$5,000.00 grant from Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc. (SIA), a \$2,000.00 grant from the Newton County Community Foundation; private monetary donation from Emerson Sondgerath Chevrolet, Dr. Reed - optometrist, Community State Bank of Brook; along with donations of materials from Ball Jar, Burpee Seeds, Bennett's Greenhouse, Lake Valley Seeds, and corn from Berenda Farms. This cross curricular program is still in place this school year. Individual student needs (workforce ready skills) are still being taught in this program. Students help prepare a variety of food items that are sold

between periods. Last year, the Rebel Café raised around \$14,000.00 that was given away in scholarships.

School and Community Information

South Newton Schools are centrally located on 60 acres in Jefferson Township in Newton County in northwest Indiana. Students who live in Washington, Iroquois, Grant, and Jefferson Townships in Newton County and York Township in Benton County attend South Newton Schools. The Corporation consists of 195.5 square miles. The school district consists of one elementary, one middle school, and one high school. There are approximately 845 students enrolled at South Newton School Corporation this school year (2022-2023). Over the years, the student population has declined due to industry moving out of our community. More recently, the population has stabilized. The elementary, middle, and high schools are located on the same campus and are under one roof.

The community is rich in agriculture production and the agribusiness enterprises needed to support this production. Over the last several years, several small businesses have moved out of the area. Some light manufacturing still remains in the area providing some high tech industry to the community. The community supports the educational programs with volunteers and financial resources. It also provides individuals who are willing to serve on numerous committees to enhance the function of the educational community.

Major changes in the technical, vocational, and academic curriculum have taken place over the years. Cooperative planning with parents, students, staff, administration, business leaders and community resource people has driven this change process. Many staff members and administrators have participated in local, state, and national workshops to glean the most current information regarding educational curriculum. Some of the major change include:

- 1) Combination of three elementary schools into one facility.
- 2) Major renovation at the South Newton Middle and Senior High School every two years with bond money.
- 3) Chromebooks for every student summer of 2018 and are replaced every four years.
- 4) A preschool, all day kindergarten and several after school programs function with support from Newton County Step Ahead, Purdue Cooperative Extension Service, and other agencies.
- 5) 1:1 implementation grades 3-12, 2014/2015; K-2 iPad implementation, 2015/2016
- 6) Upgrade of technology infrastructure (2013)
- 7) New teacher evaluation system (Standards for Success) – student learning objectives

(2012)

8) Curriculum alignment to the Indiana State Standards: **documenting the standards in curriculum**

9) Student curriculum support is arranged with teachers on an ongoing, as needed basis.

10) Expansion of dual credit agreements with colleges, currently 24 dual credit classes as well as 4

Advanced Placement (AP) classes (English 11, English 12, Calculus and Biology)

11) Monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings

Our corporation has demonstrated its commitment to making the most improvements with the amount of dollars we have received. We believe the infrastructure is in place to facilitate the vocational and academic change that needs to happen to enable all of our students to succeed.

The Past, Present and Future of School Improvement at South Newton High School

In 2015/2016, our staff felt the need for our students to “bond” with one another and their teacher. This bonding would eventually lead to having 30 minutes each day dedicated to student teacher interaction. We called this program PRIDE – Personal Responsibility In Developing Excellence. ***PRIDE allows for individuals from different cultural backgrounds to integrate comfortably within a safe environment thus gaining confidence & assistance to grow & develop academically & socially.***

Each PRIDE is made up of a few freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. Tutoring is available most every day to help our academic struggling students.

- ***Closed 2 days a week for building rapport and guidance/scheduling needs***
 - *To develop a career plan*
 - *To develop appropriate social behavior including the digital environment*
 - *To complete a four-year course selection plan*
 - *To communicate academic progress to parents*
 - *Monday devoted to Service Learning – Graduation Pathway*
- ***Open 2 days a week for club meetings and getting help from teachers***

- *Friday is used for developing socialization skills between multiple PRIDE groups*

Beginning the fall of 2014, South Newton High School began our 1:1 technology program. Staff development and several committee meetings took place in order to prepare our teaching staff for the upcoming change in delivery of instruction. This computer initiative enhanced student learning and challenged students to become prepared digitally for the upcoming world in which they will live. In the fall of 2018, students received the second round of 1:1 computers. We purchased Chromebooks for grades 9-12.

Technology

Our infrastructure (switches and fiber optic cable) has been upgraded to 10 GB, we have added onto our wireless capacity and invested in a new firewall / content filter. South Newton has increased our bandwidth to 1000 mbs. This upgrade has opened the door to several electronic curriculum based lessons. Now teachers can video stream much more easily and consistently. We have also increased our wireless access points to 75 units, allowing more access consistency as students move from one classroom to another. In addition we have added 5 outside access points on campus and Gmail accounts have been added for all students in grades 6-12. Five virtual reality sets have been purchased to enhance academics.

Learning Environment Implementation & Student Expectations

- Teachers have developed an online presence
- Teachers have moved instructional practices to a digital format vs paper
- Teachers will continue to learn current educational technology practices
- Teachers will follow e-Learning protocols & expectations
- Students will follow teacher e-Learning expectations and verify attendance
- Students will adhere to the technology handbook, guidelines and contract
- Students will meet classroom expectations in the 1:1 environment

Curriculum

For a small school, South Newton High School offers a wide range of class to meet student

needs. We offer CTE classes:

Ag classes, two Ag teachers with several classes dual credit, Precision Farming, Drones

Two Medical classes

Interactive Media class

FACS classes

Computer classes – networking, programing

AP classes in 11th and 12th English, Biology, Calculus

Art classes – Ceramics and Digital Design, Fiber, Drawing and Painting

Band, Choir

Science--Biology, Chemistry, Anatomy Physiology

Math--Algebra – Calculus, CCR Bridge, Algebra II Finance

History--World History (dual credit) – Government and Economics

English--Regular English, AP English, Honors English 10, Honors English 9

Special Education--Resource room and English

PE classes

Spanish I-IV

A copy of our curriculum is located in the main office at the High School.

Key practices for accelerating student achievement

High expectations

- South Newton has provided several classes for students seeking to become college and career ready. Vocational offerings in the area of technology, engineering, family and consumer sciences and agriculture have increased over the years, along with other preparatory classes. Emphasis has been placed on problem solving skills and higher math skills. Academics have been stressed more in relation to taking post-secondary training after graduation. Even though not every student will attend college, classes are structured to challenge all students.
- Numerous courses from core classes to career and technical courses offer dual credit with Ivy Tech Community College. Students are highly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

Collaboration

- Currently teachers are implementing PLC's (Professional Learning Communities) as their professional development. PLC's meet once per month for one hour.

Discussions are centered around blended instruction aimed at teaching high-level academic and technical content with the use of available technology.

Guidance

- Each student, plus his or her parents/guardian, conferences with our Guidance Director to complete an accelerated program of study with an in-depth academic or vocational-technical goal.
- Students now have staff advocates in our PRIDE program. Each teacher has around 14 students to assist with classes, grades and scheduling.

Support

- South Newton provides a structured system of extra help to enable students who may lack adequate preparation to pass their classes. Students are encouraged to receive tutoring either before or after school for about 15 minutes on any given day without losing valuable class time. Student tutors have been used throughout the year. Students needing a quiet place to study with some teacher help can have this opportunity two days per week after school. Students may ride our activity bus at 5:00 p. m. to selected drop off points in our community.
- PRIDE also offers time for students to study most days.

Assessment

- South Newton teachers and staff use student assessment and program evaluation data to continuously improve the school climate, organization, management, curricula and instruction.
- We use NWEA, ISTEP, USA Test Prep (remediation), and Pearson XL (remediation).

Learning Aids to Assist Students

- Resource Center
- Assisted Testing
- PRIDE time - guided study, makeup work, teacher assistance
- Peer tutoring
- Athletic Study Tables
- Summer School
- Online Credit Recovery – Edgenuity
- After school help

Academic Expectations for Students at South Newton High School

All students are expected to graduate from South Newton High School.

1. Students develop their four-year high school curricular plan at the end of their 8th grade year. .
2. Students are encouraged to complete a course in mathematics each year.
3. With a few exceptions, students may only take one language arts class at a time.
4. Accommodations are made for students with individualized educational plans.
5. Edgenuity (online classes) are available for credit recovery in English, Biology, Math, Social Studies classes.
6. South Newton High School requires 42 credits and takes all state mandated tests.

Indian Trails Area Career Center

Students from South Newton are eligible to participate in certain vocational courses offered at other area schools under the direction of the Indian Trails Area Career Center. These opportunities expand the course selection available to students and will enable them to receive career and technical training in the area that matches their career plan.

Remediation/Summer School

Summer school/remediation classes are also held four weeks after the end of school. Offered classes include English and Algebra I. Online credit recovery classes are available in the summer.

Dual Credit Courses

Students can receive college credit for successful completion of courses in the following courses:

Tech	English Language Composition	Ivy
Tech	English Literature & Composition	Ivy
Tech	College Algebra, Trigonometry	Ivy
Tech	Agriculture Power, Structure & Technology	Ivy
Tech	Agri-Business Management	Ivy
Tech	Food Science, Animal Science, ALS Foods, ALS Animal	Ivy

	Horticultural Science	Ivy
Tech		
	Plant & Soil Science, Natural Resources	Ivy
Tech		
	Welding Technology I, Introduction to Welding	Ivy
Tech		
	Welding Technology I, Shielded Metal Arc Welding	Ivy
Tech		
	Welding Technology II, Oxygen-Fuel Gas Welding	Ivy
Tech		
	Welding Technology II, Gas Metal Arc Welding	Ivy
Tech		
	Computer Integrated Manufacturing	Ivy
Tech		
	Digital Electronics	Ivy
Tech		
	HSE I: Intro to Health Careers	Ivy
Tech		
	Medical Terminology	Ivy
Tech		

State Testing

ISTEP+ Math Pass %	School	State Average
2015-2016	37.5%	34.6%
2016-2017	15.8%	34.6%
2017-2018	27.3%	36.8%
2018-2019	35.1%	35.3%
2019-2020	COVID	COVID
2020-2021	26.9%	37.1%

ISTEP+ English Pass %		
2015-2016	54.2%	59.0%
2016-2017	61.4%	60.5%
2017-2018	69.1%	58.9%
2018-2019	70.2%	62.4%
2019-2020	COVID	COVID
2020-2021	57%	65.9%

ISTEP+ Science Pass %		
2015-2016	54.2%	58.8%
2016-2017	56.1%	57.1%
2017-2018	65.0%	52.1%
2018-2019	57%	38.6%
2019-2020	COVID	COVID
2020-2021	31%	31.8%

ISTEP+ Math & English Pass Both %		
2015-2016	33.8%	32.2%
2016-2017	15.8%	34.3%
2017-2018	27.3%	34.3%
2018-2019	33.3%	33.7%
2019-2020	COVID	COVID
2020-2021	23%	36.4%

School Report Card

Year	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	"B"	"B"			"B"	"B"	"B"

Enrollment

Grade	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
9	68	60	60	54	56	46	77
10	71	55	57	63	73	58	48
11	43	65	56	55	54	71	56
12	70	40	65	53	57	58	65
Total Enrolled	252	220	240	225	240	233	246

Professional Development Professional Learning Communities

When we began our 1:1 initiative 2014-2015, several teachers conducted 1:1 presentations to the staff. Teachers wanted to learn more about the latest digital learning tools in order to use them in their classroom. AdvancED conducted a review of South Newton High School in the spring of 2017. We used some Professional Development time to prepare for this accreditation visitation.

South Newton High School professional development has transitioned into PLC's (Professional Learning Communities) starting in 2017. Teachers decide their research topic and then meet once per month for one hour. High School staff established collaborative teams focused on learning. Other aspects include collective inquiry, action orientation and experimentation, commitment to continuous improvement, and results orientation. Each one of these parts will take time to fully implement. The PLC program worked well in 2017. We will continue with PLC for the 2022-2023 school year.

Resources

- Presentations by South Newton staff related to research in a variety of sources

- Presentations by local special education cooperative staff

- Presentations by "outside" speakers on topics motivational and academic

- Presentations through online providers that focus on elements of our plan

Methodology of PLC's/Professional Development

- Teachers continue to review and implement core educational concepts regarding our 1:1 initiative.
- During PLC meetings, teachers discuss curricular issues and concerns in order to make decisions regarding appropriate courses of action for school improvement.
- PLC's meet for one hour per month.
- New teacher orientation, developed and delivered by teaching staff members, is conducted each summer prior to the opening of school. This has been very beneficial to new teachers in the corporation.
- Establishment of PLC through the creation and implementation of: shared mission, vision, values, and goals. Collaborative teams focused on learning, collective inquiry, action orientation and experimentation, commitment to continuous improvement, and results orientation.

Curriculum Highlights

Introduction to Manufacturing

Advanced Placement Classes – English 11, English 12, Biology, Calculus, English, Regular English – AP English (grades 11 and 12)

Honors Class – English 9, English 10

Science, Biology, Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology

Math, Algebra – Calculus, CCR Bridge

History, World History, US History, Government and Economics

Special Education--Resource room and English

Algebra offered in middle school

Dual Credit courses

Vocational classes

Web based educational supplements

Cross-curricular program with Family and Consumer Science, Ag departments and the Athletic

Department to help develop independent living skills for some Special Education students.

Variety of Agricultural classes – many are dual credit

Precision Agriculture- Cross-curricular pathway between PLTW and Agriculture to teach precision

technology used in Agriculture and Engineering. Topics include but are not limited to: GPS and satellites, agronomic principles, drone technology, computer information technology, and hydrology.

Fine arts- Instrumental music, Choral music, Visual arts, Ceramics, Digital Design, Fiber Computer Science/Programming/Networking

Family and Consumer Sciences

Medical Terms class and Health Science I and II

PE

Spanish I – IV

A copy of South Newton High School curriculum is located in the main office.

Assessments/Remediation

Local teacher assessments approved by the administration

Teacher evaluation using the Standards for Success model

Advanced Placement testing

SAT

PSAT

IXL

USA Test Prep

Turnitin – English

Pearson XL

Enrollment by Ethnicity, 2017-2018 2018-2019 2019-2020 2020-2021 2021-2022

Caucasian	85.8%	87.1%	83.8%	not avail.	
	80.8%				
Hispanic	10.4%	8.9%	12.9%		
	16.6%				
African-American	2.5%	2.2%	1.7%		
	.0004%				
Total Students	240	225	240		246

Free/Reduced Lunch 2017-2018 2018-2019 2019-2020 2020-2021 2021-2022

Paid lunches	116 (48.3%)	111 (49.3%)	126 (52.5%)	not avail.	119
	(48.3%)				
Free lunches	106 (44.2%)	97 (43.1%)	108 (45%)		116
	(47%)				
Reduced	8 (7.5%)	17 (7.6%)	18 (7.5%)		11
	(.04%)				

Special Education 2017-2018 2018-2019 2019-2020 2020-2021 2021-2022

Special Education	30 (12.5%)	26 (11.6%)	33 (13.8%)	not avail.	39 (17%)
General Education	210 (87.5%)	199 (88.4%)	207 (86.3%)		94 (83%)

South Newton High School employees 2 licensed special education teachers plus 3 special education paraprofessionals.

ELL Education .04%/10 students currently taking the WIDA test

Individual Learning Plans with students' present levels are provided annually. Students receive accommodations (class and state testing). English New Language class offered with computer based learning. Students have resource study hall for assignment completion, and support.

The WIDA Consortium (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment. WIDA supports academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high quality standards, and assessments. WIDA PD is provided by the consortium.

SAT Composite Score

Year	School	State Average
2015-2016	1093	983
2016-2017	1004	1073
2017-2018	1010	1116
2018-2019	1024	1106

** 2011-2015 was the old SAT test measuring on Math and Reading Scores

*** Starting with 2016, New SAT test measures Math and Evidence based reading and writing

Review of Data

Review of the data indicates that over the last couple of years, our English 10 scores have overall risen. We are very proud our English teachers have made this accomplishment. Math scores are beginning to rise and are closer to the state average. Last year our Biology (Science) score was much above the state average. Teachers continue to work hard to provide a challenging curriculum for all students, preparing them for their future.

South Newton, for being a small school, has a diverse cultural population. This diversity enriches what South Newton is all about, KIDS. Although our graduation rate has been lower than the state average at times, strides have been made and have paid off. Emphasis has been placed on student/parent contact regarding grades, homework, as well as attendance. Several students are working hard in the classroom to achieve a Core 40 diploma (55%, 2018/2019), coupled with our honors diploma 28% in 2018/2019. The socio-economic status of the area has seen a downward spiral in the last 15 years due to industry moving out of the area. Enrollment has declined somewhat over the last fifteen years. This creates difficulties as just one or two student outcomes can skew performance categories.

Our free lunch rate continues to be fairly stable in the mid to upper 40%. Families struggle because of the limited number of jobs available in the South Newton School District.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Students are encouraged to take seven classes for credit each semester unless he/she has an IEP. Students may elect to take one study hall per semester. Additional preparation outside the classroom may be necessary for course completion.

Students will be enrolled in high school for eight semesters. Conditions may warrant that a student petition the school board for early graduation, at the end of seven

semesters if all requirements are met according to the state and local school board guidelines.

South Newton High School requires 42 credits to receive a diploma. There are four types of diplomas available, depending on courses taken and the level of success earned: General, Core 40, Core 40 with Academic Honors, and Core 40 with Technical Honors. **In order to receive an Honors diploma a student is required to earn 48 specific credits.**

Graduation Pathways – The state of Indiana has provided schools with another way to graduate beside the traditional path (42 credits and pass two state tests.) Our Guidance Director has done an excellent job of informing students and parents of the new pathway. Several of our students are participating in this pathway with great success – earning a diploma. Students have to have 42 credits plus service learning and then meet one of the requirements in the postsecondary readiness competencies. More details are in our student handbook.

Diplomas

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Honors	14 (34.1%)	13(21%)	13 (28%)	41.3%	14.5%	.08%
Core 40	26 (63.4%)	34(55%)	25 (55%)	54.3%	47.2%	36.0%
General	1 (2.4%)	8(13%)	0	4.3%	18.1%	22.0%
Tech. Honors	2 (5%)	3(5%)	3 (7%)		.018%	.01%
Academic Technical	3 (7.5%)	3(5%)	4 (9%)		16.3%	20%
Cert. Of Completion	1 (2.5%)	1(2%)	0	0	.01%	.04%

Academic Honors Diploma/Core 40 Diploma

All students are encouraged by staff members to obtain a Core 40 or Academic Honors Diploma. Our Guidance Director meets with students each year to discuss

their 4-year plan. Staff members also remind students throughout the school year of the importance of a Core 40 or Academic Honors Diploma.

Graduation Rate

After lunch we have homeroom (PRIDE – 30 minutes) every day. PRIDE teachers are responsible for monitoring their students' grades across all classes. Teachers discuss grades with students on a regular basis and help students develop a plan to improve grades. Students can receive help during the following times: before school starts – 15 minutes, after school before the buses leave – 15 minutes before buses leave. Students are allowed, twice per week, to go to a teacher for help during PRIDE time. The Principal and Guidance Director meet regularly with students that are struggling in school. Parents are contacted when needed to help encourage their child to work harder and pass all classes. We Expect All Students To Pass All Their Classes. Edgenuity online classes are available to students that have failed required classes.

Graduation Rate

Year	% Passing	# of Students	State Average %
2015-2016	91.7	66	89.1
2016-2017	80.4	40	87.2
2017-2018	92.4	61	88.1
2018-2019	81.0	47	87.3
2019-2020	79.3	51	86.4%
2020-2021	93.2	59	Not Avail.

State Testing in Math and English

Last spring's (2019) ISTEP testing had mixed results for South Newton High School. English results (69%) were higher than the state average. Our English teachers stress higher order thinking questions in the classroom. Students work on reading and writing nearly every day.

Math results – 33% of our Math students passed the Spring ISTEP test. This is 1% lower than the state average. Up from 27% in 2018. We have made strides in this area. Math teachers have tried a variety of different teaching strategies along with several meetings the past couple of years.

Science scores from the 2017-18 test – We scored 65% pass rate compared to the state 52%. Our Biology teacher is doing a fantastic job for only her second year of teaching.

Areas of Immediate Improvement

Attendance continues to be an area of needed improvement. Strides have been made, but consistency is needed. Also, we continue to struggle with students passing classes. This year, we have a grade committee that meets with students and parents when necessary. More collaboration is occurring among teachers to help assist these students.

Contributing Factors of Absenteeism

- Increase in medical days - poor health
- Increase in court days - increase in incarceration
- Lack of consistent parental involvement in education
- Lack of student motivation to come to school
- Nobody at home to help student prepare for school

Strategies to Improve Absenteeism

- Consistently meeting with students to discuss attendance violations
- Increase parent communication through email, phone calls, inviting parent(s) to come in to school
- Consistently communicate with Probation Department about excessive absences
- Enforcement of school attendance policy

School Safety Information

Mr. Doug Nelson (Elementary Assistant Principal) and Mr. Chris Bell (High School Assistant Principal/Athletic Director) serve as the corporation school safety specialist. All staff members share the responsibility on matters relating to our school's safe environment. Procedures and policies are reviewed with the staff annually. It is the responsibility of all employees to make sure that doors are secure, hallways monitored, and school safety procedures are followed. Students are encouraged to speak to teachers, guidance director, and the administration regarding any safety issues that come up in a student's life. Concerns are dealt with in a timely fashion.

Student safety is the top priority and everyone's responsibility. Many staff members have access to Guard 911 in case a shooter enters the building. As of the fall of 2019, South Newton has upgraded several security cameras and installed a panic button to lock certain interior doors and automatically calls our local police department. We have also added a device that if a door is left open an alarm will sound until the door

is closed. In addition, our local Sheriff's Department has an officer in a vehicle in our parking lot most school days. We reconfigured our main office front door entry to provide more safety and security.

Fire/Tornado Evacuations are posted in every classroom. Yearly-updated guidelines explain safety evacuation routes and safe locations in case of a tornado or fire. Red clipboards are in every classroom. These clipboards have: a copy of the school-wide safety plan, classroom rosters, and any IEP or 504 plans for any student who may need special assistance during time of evacuation. This clipboard is taken during all drills. Attendance is taken and any student not with his or her class is reported to the emergency supervisor. If for some reason a student is missing or a problem arises, the clipboard will be used as a signal. Drills for unstructured times will occur throughout the school year. Crisis drills are also practiced throughout the year as well as a "lock down" situation.

Quick School Safety Reference Guides are important and serve to outline procedures in the case of an emergency. Each classroom has a copy of this document (lockout, lockdown, evacuate and shelter). Though no plan can prepare one completely, a consistent, thorough plan that is followed closely by everyone can make an emergency situation less stressful and save lives.

Cameras/Audio – South Newton School Corporation has invested in 75 digital cameras throughout the campus to help keep our students safe. Speaker systems have been placed throughout the entire school corporation grounds. These serve the purpose of being able to address the entire corporation grounds in case of an emergency. We have not invested in a school resource officer, but the Sheriff's office can link into our camera system.

School Improvement Plan for South Newton High School

2019 – 2020

GOAL I – Our goal is to improve our school attendance to 96.3%.

Intervention – A vital component to a good education is good attendance. Traditionally over the last several years our attendance rate has been in the 95% range. We have tried some interventions that have not proven consistently effective from year to year. However this last year, one of our PLC groups helped develop a plan to improve attendance and it worked. We went from many years in the 95% range to 96.23 last year. Attendance was monitored more closely with rewards being given.

Activities/Strategies – In order to promote better attendance, we will monitor class attendance each week to determine who has the best attendance. Student conferences will be held at 3 and 6 days of absence fairly consistently. Attendance letters will be given to students during our conference (students will initial the letter) and a copy will be sent home requesting a parent conference when needed. Our attendance committee (six staff members) will be involved again this year to meet with students that violate our attendance policy of 7 days of absence per semester. The committee will meet with the student and parent to decide if the student will have their credits reinstated. The student could be put on attendance probation for the semester. Attendance data will be posted in the hallway. The class with the best attendance and meeting our goal will be allowed to go to lunch 2-3 minutes early for three days. At the end of each month, we will have a sundae bar during lunch for the winning class. Students with perfect attendance will be recognized each nine weeks with a certificate at our awards program.

Attendance By Grade

Grade	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Grade 9	95.5%	95.3%	95.7%	95.8%	96.58%			
Grade 10	95.5%	95.9%	95.3%	94.7%	96.40%			
Grade 11	95.7%	95.0%	94.8%	94.9%	96.06%			
Grade 12	95.4%	94.3%	94.8%	94.3%	95.77%			
All Grades	95.6%	95.1%	95.2%	94.8%	96.23%			

Our goal will be to increase our attendance rate from 96.2% to 96.3%.

Goal II – Professional Learning Communities

Intervention – Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are educator-led research and discussions. Topics this year include: Best Practices (Tech), Collegiality, Raising the Bar, RTI (Multi-tiered intervention), Service Learning and Incentives. PLC groups are required to complete forms regarding their meeting times and a summary of their discussion. Last year one PLC (Incentive) worked to recognize better class attendance and provided an end of the year fun trip for students that achieved certain grades and no discipline referrals. This was very successful in raising our attendance rate and motivating students to try harder.

Activities/Strategies – Staff members are required to participate in their PLC one hour per month. A group member will take notes during the meeting and then share them with the Principal. Staff members are responsible for participation in their PLC. At the end of the year, the PLC will present their findings and if they want to, implement changes with the approval of the Principal for the next school year. Staff members have been happy with this change of professional development because they investigate educational topics they are interested in, thus improving their teaching.

2020 – 2021

GOAL I – Our goal is to improve our school attendance rate to 96.4%.

Intervention – Good attendance is vitally important to a good education. Employers expect employees to have good attendance. We prepare students for future jobs, therefore we need to help them establish good habits while in high school. For those students not making good attendance choices, we must intervene to help them.

Activities/Strategies - We will continue weekly monitoring of individual student attendance. Attendance letters will continue to be sent to students and parents at 3 and 6 days absence. The attendance committee will meet when needed to have an attendance hearing. Probation will become more involved in our attendance process.

We will continue with recognizing the class with the best attendance by letting them go to lunch a little early for three days. Data will be posted in the school. We will also continue recognizing the class with the best attendance for the month by giving them a sundae bar at lunch. Each month from the winning class, we will draw 3 student names for gift items. Students with perfect attendance will be recognized each nine weeks with a certificate at our awards program.

GOAL II – Professional Learning Communities

Intervention – PLC’s will be utilized again this year to improve educational instruction. Staff members will meet at the beginning of the year to discuss possible topics and then decide which PLC they will participate in.

Activities/Strategies - Staff members will be free to choose their subject. Financial resources will be used when sources are available. Collaboration among the PLC is vital to ensure best practices are being gathered. Learned material will be applied to the classroom to improve the educational environment. Testing scores should go up as a result of PLC finding “What works.”

2021 – 2022

GOAL I – Our goal is to improve our school attendance to 96.5%.

Interventions – Ground work has been laid in the previous two years to reach this goal. Students will have experienced the opportunity to have worked on good attendance. Heading into their Senior year (usually the worst attendance is seen this year) they will be well-equipped to realize the importance of good attendance and what it will allow them to accomplish in life. They will be able to obtain a better job and as some move on into college, this will help with improved grades. Since a diploma is worth an estimated value of around \$800,000.00 - 1.2 million dollars, their chances of being financially successful has increased.

Activities/Strategies - We will continue with weekly monitoring of individual attendance and class attendance. The attendance committee will still meet with students that have surpassed the attendance policy. Winning classes with the best attendance for the week will be allowed to go to lunch early three days. Attendance data will be posted in our school. The class with the best attendance for the month will receive a sundae bar or ice cream at lunch. Students with perfect attendance will be recognized each nine weeks with a certificate at our awards program.

GOAL II – Professional Learning Communities

Intervention – Staff members will continue meeting in small groups PLC to gain educational knowledge to help students be successful in school.

Activities/Strategies - A wide variety of topics will be explored to see which topics would best help our students. Once a topic is selected and explored, PLC group members will implement necessary techniques to aid student learning. Collaboration continues to be a vital part of this process.

2022 – 2023

GOAL I – Our goal is to improve our school attendance to 96.6%.

Interventions – Ground work has been laid in the previous three years us to reach this goal. Our Response to Intervention Committee will analyze and clarify the critical importance of school attendance and its correlation to academic success in school subjects. We will continue to provide research and validation from experts to inform our students of the necessity to develop good attendance in school as a critical element for job success. We intend to elevate each student’s awareness of the value, and entry level significance, of a high school diploma.

Activities/Strategies - We will continue with weekly monitoring of individual attendance and class attendance. The attendance committee will still meet with students that have surpassed the attendance policy. Additionally, we will monitor student progress and consequentially design a program for supervised completion of assignments. Our Response to Intervention team is the impetus for our goal’s success. Each faculty member will be involved as the monitor and evaluator of all assigned work. The success of this intervention will depend on assigning students to supervised periods of after school study and support. This is a feasible strategy because we have access to resources for extend pay to licensed teachers and after school transportation for students and eliminate the need for a parent to come and pick a student.

GOAL II – Professional Learning Communities

Intervention – Staff members will continue meeting in small group PLC to gain educational knowledge to help students be successful in school. Our learning strategies will incorporate problem-solving, role playing, critical thinking. We will ask our community to be curious and submit questions for research and evaluation.

**South Newton High School
13102 South 50 East
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2023 - 2024