

Running head: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

*Check and Connect* Attendance Intervention

By

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

*Check and Connect* Attendance Intervention Abstract

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This school improvement project addressed the need to provide tier-two attendance intervention to all chronically absent students. As the data showed, many students at Bryan were chronically absent during the academic school day, which was contributing to the steady high number of failing grades among students at Bryan. The *Check and Connect* (Kearney, 2016) Bryan attendance intervention was designed to provide early interventions to support new-to Bryan students during the 2019-2020 second semester. The intervention included a Three-Day one-on-one meeting with the student and attendance team member, discussing the student's absence and any barriers that are keeping the student from getting to school. If the student reached five missed attendance days, the student began weekly check-ins with the assigned attendance member. During the check-ins, the attendance team member and student discussed the student's attendance barriers, reasons for absence, discussed any assistance the school could provide, as well as set an attendance goal. This *Check and Connect*, continued until the student reached ten days of absence, or until the student had steady attendance for four academic weeks.

This intervention provided the Bryan Community Attendance Team with an attendance framework and an actionable intervention to work towards the school's 2019-2020 Student Improvement Goal of increasing student achievement. While the *Check and Connect* intervention data did not indicate an increase of student achievement, the Bryan Community Attendance team continued to implement the intervention through the duration of the 2020 academic school year.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

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## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Table of Contents

|                                                  |           |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>                   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 2: Student Learning Data Analysis</b> | <b>27</b> |
| <b>Chapter 3: Review of Best Practices</b>       | <b>37</b> |
| <b>Chapter 4: Plan of Action</b>                 | <b>44</b> |
| <b>Chapter 5: Results</b>                        | <b>48</b> |
| <b>Chapter 6: Conclusions</b>                    | <b>51</b> |
| <b>References</b>                                | <b>61</b> |
| <b>Appendices</b>                                | <b>64</b> |

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

### Chapter 1: Introduction

#### **Bryan Community Focus Program, Lincoln Nebraska**

Detailed below is an introductory description of Lincoln, Nebraska and the Lincoln Public Schools District, with an intentional focus on the Bryan Community Focus Program. The Bryan Community Focus program was established and maintained with the district's "All Means All" philosophy. This section details the community, district, and school context of the author's school improvement project.

#### **History of Lincoln, Nebraska**

The second largest city in Nebraska and current home of the state's capital began its journey as the village of Lancaster in 1856. Lancaster was established by a salt company as the original settlers were drawn to the area by the salt flats. To the new residents' disappointment, it was determined early on that salt mining would not be feasible as the saltwater basin was located underwater. Lancaster, which was later renamed after President Abraham Lincoln in 1887, was an ideal location for a railroad junction. Being centrally located between Chicago and Denver, Lincoln became a railroad junction for nineteen routes. Surrounding local towns such as Havelock, Bethany, and University Place were also large railroad participants. Their close proximity and similar work goals lead to each of these towns to be annexed between the years of 1926-1930. Today, these areas of the city still hold remnants of the unique culture each town brought to Lincoln. (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2019).

Lincoln has a strong agricultural history and participates in the growing and selling of soybeans, corn, wheat, and grain and is actively involved in milling. Additionally, the city is involved in the manufacturing of industrial rubber, software, motorcycles, watercraft, bricks, and

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

pharmaceuticals. Recently, Lincoln added growth in insurance, aviation services, medical research, and communication technology. Since early on in the city's inception, Lincoln has held education as a large priority. Educational institutions were established early, with the University of Nebraska- Lincoln opening its doors in 1869. Nebraska Wesleyan University followed in 1887, Union College in 1891, and Southeast Community College in 1973. (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2019).

### **The community of Lincoln, Nebraska.**

Lincoln's 2019 population is 284,000 and is the seventy-second largest city in the United States. In 2019, Lincoln had an annual growth rate of 1.24% and density of 2,900 people per mile. In 1970, the United States government-designated Lincoln as a refugee-friendly city. This label was established based on Lincoln's size, educational institutions, and stable economy. Lincoln was named one of the top welcoming cities in America because of the city's willingness to welcome refugees, starting back in the 1980s. Lincoln has refugees from over forty countries, with the fastest-growing population being Karen moving to Lincoln from Thailand and Burma to escape ethnic and political war. The 2019 racial composition of Lincoln includes 85.4% white, 4.4% African-American, 4.64% Asian, .59 %Native American, .07% Pacific Islander, 3.26% identifying as two or more races and self-identifying as other is 1.6%. (World Population Review, 2019;See Appendix B).

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

### **Lincoln Public School District**

Detailed below is an introductory description of Lincoln Public Schools. This section provides information on the history, current practices and supports of the district.

#### **History of Lincoln Public Schools.**

Less than a decade after the village of Lancaster was founded, John Cadman opened the first public school in 1865. Varying greatly from the public schools of today, the first school was in the dugout of Mr. Cadman's home. A year later, a second school was opened at ninth and P Streets and educated approximately thirty children. Additional schools continued to be built, and in 1867, a fee of fifty cents a month was charged by the schools. Schools were continually being outgrown and additional schools were built in order to keep up with the rapid growth. The first high school, Lincoln High School, was built and opened in 1871. The current building opened in 1915 and is still in operation ([lps.org/history](http://lps.org/history)). Lincoln has since opened five additional comprehensive high schools. Lincoln Northeast High School opened in 1941, Lincoln Southeast High School in 1955, Lincoln East High School in 1967, Lincoln Southwest in 2002, and Lincoln North Star in 2003 ([lps.org/news/2006bondstatus](http://lps.org/news/2006bondstatus)). The addition of three high school focus programs were opened to support the learning and success of all students. Bryan Community Focus Program was first opened as Lincoln Learning Center in 1980, followed by the opening of the Science Focus Program and Arts and Humanities Focus Program in 1996.

#### **About the Lincoln Public Schools District.**

Lincoln Public Schools is currently the second largest school district in Nebraska and serves 42,011 students. The district has 1,716 students participating in the early childhood program, with 39 elementary schools (kindergarten-grade five) serving 18,758 students. There

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

are 12 middle schools (grade six-eight) serving 8,995 students, and six comprehensive high schools serving 12,542 students (LPS Statistical Handbook, 2018). In addition to these traditional school opportunities, Lincoln Public Schools also offers students the opportunity to participate in the Don Sherrill Education Center (PreK-five), Nuernberger Education Center (six-eight), Bryan Community Focus Program (nine- twelve), Science Focus Program (nine-twelve), Arts and Humanities (nine-twelve) and the Yankee Hill Education Center (special needs behavior program nine-twelve; see Appendix C) Lincoln Public Schools serves a diverse academic community: eight percent of all Lincoln Public Schools participate in the English Language Learner programs, fourteen percent of all students participate in the gifted program, sixteen percent of all students qualify for special education services and forty-six percent of all students qualify for free and reduced lunch (Lincoln Public Schools Handbook). Lincoln Public Schools prides itself on providing educational equity, stating that the district “does not discriminate on basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, genetic information, citizenship or economic status.” (lps.org, n.d).

Overseeing the operations of Lincoln Public Schools is the Lincoln Board of Education. Each of the nine board members is elected and serves a four year, non-paid term. The board meets biweekly on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at the Lincoln Public Schools District Office. The mission of the Lincoln School Board is “the development of responsible adults who are productive citizens of a pluralistic community, nation, and world, who are prepared to learn throughout their lives; and who are appreciative of the arts, culture, and history” (LPS Website, n.d).



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

According to the Lincoln Public Schools website, Lincoln Public Schools Goals for Students include the following:

1. Demonstrate competence and fluency in the essential skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, in the English language, and mathematics.
2. Think critically and creatively, using higher order thinking skills to make decisions, solve problems, and create new perspectives and possibilities.
3. Understand the important ideas from the arts, humanities, sciences, and mathematics, and understand the relationships among them.
4. Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for living in a democracy and becoming a contributing member of society.
5. Understand and celebrate the diversity and interdependence of our pluralistic, multicultural community, nation, and world.
6. Respect and care for themselves and others.
7. Respect and care for the natural environment.
8. Work with others productively and cooperatively.
9. Develop the skills and attitudes essential to enter the workforce.
10. Become a lifelong learner.
11. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills essential for achieving lifelong health.

(taken from the Lincoln Public Schools Instruction website)

## **Lincoln Public Schools District Supports**

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

In order to achieve the aforementioned student goals, Lincoln Public Schools has implemented a variety of teacher and student support and policies. With the belief that teachers are the largest contributing factor of student success, the district provides and requires each employee with the opportunity for continuous development of the necessary skills to be effective in their position. Lincoln Public Schools offers a variety of workshops and classes that are developed by curriculum specialists and program administrators. These classes are intended to keep teachers up-to-date on curriculum implementation and instructional strategies. Additionally, these professional development initiatives are required based on the employee contract, needed in order to become tenured or qualify for salary advancement (LPS Website, n.d).

Lincoln Public Schools has recently created and implemented a new instructional model. The Lincoln Public Schools Instructional Design was developed to assist teachers in serving every classroom, every child, every day ([lps.org/curriculum](http://lps.org/curriculum)). The Lincoln Public Schools Instructional Design template was designed with components researched and developed by Anita Archer, *Classroom Instruction That Works* by Robert Marzano, and Charlotte Danielson's work in *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teachers*. The instructional design templates provide educators with a structure to collaboratively plan coherent lessons. The first of two columns provides space for the teacher to think about the learning objectives, lesson opener, teaching of "I do", "We do", and "You do", followed by a lesson closure. The second column provides the instructor with the opportunity to plan out questions, formative assessments, and increase opportunities for students to respond throughout the lesson.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

Every certified Lincoln Public Schools' educator participates in and is evaluated using the LPS teacher appraisal system based on Danielson's work. This appraisal system was designed to provide reflection support in order to assist teachers in their professional growth. The program was developed to assist teachers in their complex profession by providing them the opportunity to increase their skills of analyzing their practice, share teaching ideas and the opportunity to learn from experienced colleagues. The Pathwise process of professional growth was created with the findings from Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teachers*. The appraisal system is based on twenty-two components that are clustered into four domains: planning and preparation, classroom environment, professional responsibilities, and instruction. The goal is to evaluate a teacher's performance on their framework for teaching, evidence of teacher demonstration, and levels of performance.

In 2007, Lincoln Public Schools implemented Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Adopting the use of PLC's provided certified staff the chance to work collaboratively on instructional strategies, data collection, and analysis. The overarching goal of PLC's are to provide educators with a focus from teaching to learning. Specifically, each PLC group should ensure the learning of all students, create a culture of collaboration, and focus on results (LPS Website, n.d). Each of the teacher PLC team's focus on answering the following questions:

1. What do we want students to learn?
2. How will we know if students learned the material?
3. How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?
4. How will we respond when a student has already learned the essential knowledge?

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

High school students are dismissed early each Tuesday, providing teachers with weekly time to meet and collaborate in their PLC groups. It is important to note that there is no loss in instructional time in order for the completion of this work. Instructional minutes were added to the other four days of the academic week to account for the early Tuesday dismissal.

Lincoln Public Schools implemented the use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in 2013, with an entire district adoption in 2014. PBIS is a “system of support that includes proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments” ([home.lps.org/pbis](http://home.lps.org/pbis)). This framework assists with decision-making that is research-based and used to improve student outcomes. The system is broken down into three tiers:

Tier One: Strategies are created and implemented for all students.

Tier Two: Targets students who need independent support and strategies.

Tier Three: Focuses on the development of individualized intervention plans.

The purpose of PBIS is to provide positive interventions that are data-driven, provide consistent behavioral reminders and expectations, involve the community and family to best manage problem behavior, and ultimately assist in providing strategies to assist in student achievement (LPS Website, n.d).

### **Bryan Community Focus Program**

The Bryan Community Focus Program first opened its doors as the Lincoln Learning Center in 1980 with the purpose of serving youth in an alternative high school setting. The

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

school was first opened in a vacant storage building near 40th and L Streets where the program remained for the next thirty-one years. Over the course of those years, the school changed its name to the Bryan Extension Center. The school was named after the prominent Nebraska political figure, William Jennings Bryan. Congressman Bryan was a three-time presidential candidate (1896, 1900, 1908) and Secretary of State for President Woodrow Wilson. Bryan dedicated his work to social reform, advocating for women's suffrage and prohibition (Bryan Community Website, n.d).

In 2011, Bryan was moved to its current location (formerly Hawthorne Elementary School) at 400 South 48th Street, in Lincoln, Nebraska. The change in location also allowed for the school to update to its current name: The Bryan Community Focus Program.

### **About The Bryan Community Focus Program.**

The physical profile of Bryan consists of eleven classrooms. These classrooms are filled with rigorous academic classes including, but not limited to: family and consumer sciences, physical education, English, math, social studies, science, student council, art, Business and reading. Additionally, Bryan has a media center, health office, cafeteria, student child learning center (SCLC), administration offices, and a student support room.

The Bryan Community Focus Program was purposefully labeled as a community, because that is exactly what the students and staff strive to be. Bryan Community Focus Program is an alternative high school environment that combines high behavioral and academic standards while still being flexible in order to help all students graduate. The students and staff work

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

together towards this common goal, each providing exceptional effort to connect with each other to develop individual graduation plans. While the majority of the students at Bryan are upperclassmen, Bryan does offer classes for all four of the traditional high school grades.

An alternative student environment does not mean to imply that Bryan is an expulsion program or that each of the students have been previously suspended from one of Lincoln Public School's six comprehensive high schools. The Bryan Community Focus Program welcomes all students from each of the comprehensive high schools to fill out the online self-application, complete an interview, and have the opportunity to join the program. Bryan is designed to provide individual students with a low teacher-student ratio with class size averaging 12-15 students, Learning Lab-credit allowing opportunities for students to work on assignments, monitor grades and obtain additional teacher support. Bryan also provides weekly opportunities for students to be a part of social academic instructional groups (SAIG), Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), and Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (BITS). Each Bryan student participates in restorative practices such as restorative chats and circles, along with peer mediation. In an effort to ensure the success of every student, Bryan also has a student support room which implements the Boys Town Life Skills that focus on skill development and behavior interventions. Bryan students explain their desire to attend the school as being a part of an academic environment that gives them a fresh start or support with academic anxiety, attendance deficiencies, anxiety in large classes and/or a variance of academic struggles (T. Penrod, personal communication, April 2019).

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

The relocation of Bryan Community in 2011 also included a school mascot change. Bryan was previously represented by a lion and a mouse, but is now known as a Phoenix. The symbolic switch was a physical representation of how many students described Bryan as a fresh start or rebirth in order to be successful in high school. The school has continued with the theme of the Phoenix and often refers to the acronym R.I.S.E.: Respect, Integrity, Self-Control, and Effort to describe all Bryan students (Bryan Website, n.d).

Bryan offers student-parents the opportunity to bring their children to the Student Child Learning Center (SCLC). The SCLC was first opened in the fall of 2002 and provides them with a safe environment for their young children to grow and learn while they attend classes at Bryan. The SCLC is a licensed daycare facility that is federally funded by the Sixpence Endowment grant. This grant not only allows the center to stay open, but also to operate at a 3:1 child to staff ratio. The SCLC consists of two rooms, one infant room and one toddler room. The SCLC can provide support for up to sixteen children, infants and toddlers in the center. The opening of the center has increased student-parent attendance and increases the likelihood that student-parents will complete their high school education. Parenting and early child development classes are required for all students. During the 2018-2019 school year, Bryan supported sixteen student-parents that utilized this program (T. Penrod, personal communication, April 2019).

The 2018-2019 school year introduced an enhanced system of support for the students at Bryan Community, with the opening of the Bryan support room. The support room is located on the second floor, in room 202, of the school building. The support room is staffed throughout the day with a special education teacher, as well as one paraeducator. These staff members provide

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

support to the students by being available to help students with missing work, and provide them with lessons using the structure of the Boys Town Social Skills. Students can work in the support room if they are feeling anxious, are behind on work, or have been put on an administrative plan to build their social skills (T. Penrod, personal communication, April 2019).

### **Demographic Information**

During the 2018-2019 academic school year, the Bryan Community Focus Program served 164 students. Bryan welcomes students from each of the six comprehensive high schools. During the 2018-2019 school year, Bryan served fifteen students from Lincoln East, thirty-five students from Lincoln High School, ten students from Lincoln Southwest, twenty-two students from Lincoln North Star High School, thirty-one students from Lincoln Southeast, and forty-one students from Lincoln Northeast High School (See Appendix D).

Bryan is comprised of all four high school grades. Ninth graders joined the Bryan Community Focus Program in 2012 and have remained in the school since. During the 2018-2019 year. Bryan served 11 ninth graders, 28 tenth graders, forty-seven eleventh graders, and 77 twelfth graders. Fifty-seven percent of Bryan students are female, leaving forty-three percent of the students male. Fifty percent of Bryan students identify as caucasian, 9.6% African Americans, 2.6% American Indians, .6% Asians, 18.5% Hispanic and 18.5% of students identify as two or more races (See Appendix F). Eighty percent of Bryan students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 25% of all students utilize Individual Educational Plans (IEP) (Bryan Profile, 2019).



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

During the 2018-2019 school year, Bryan had a total of 103 active, but not all enrolled, seniors, 77 seniors that were on track and 16 were completing their fifth year of high school. During the 2019 Bryan Commencement ceremony, Bryan graduated 70 students. Fifty four students were graduates who were on track and 16 were fifth year high school students. These numbers provide Bryan with a 67.9% overall graduation rate, 70.2% on time graduation rate, and 61% fifth- year graduation rate (Bryan SIP Profile; See Appendix F).

Bryan has 32 staff members. One principal, one administrative coordinator, two office secretaries, three custodians, one social worker, one therapist, one health technician, one librarian, one security officer, five support paraeducators, and sixteen certified teachers.

### **Perception Data**

The perception of a school is based partly on the school's unique culture, and also how the community believes the school is effective in climate, curriculum, relationships, and engagement.

**Unique School Culture.** Bryan Community Focus Program has a strong culture, including school-specific rituals, traditions, and ceremonies. One difference that is recognized quickly is the way in which students address the staff at Bryan. Each staff member at Bryan, excluding only the two administrators, are called by their first name rather than by their proper suffix and last name.

**Rituals.** The rituals of the Bryan Community Focus Program include a restorative justice circle with staff and peers. Using restorative justice practices, the students work to build connections, strengthen relationships, and grow as a community. Each week, every student is presented with a PBiS lesson that helps educate them on positive behavior strategies and

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

interventions. Lastly, each month, students are encouraged to participate in a Phoenix Phrenzy. These events range in a variety of activities that encourage staff and students to build stronger connections and help develop a sense of community that is cherished at Bryan Community. A few examples of previous Phoenix Phrenzy's include root beer floats, school picnics, and Halloween events.

***Traditions.*** Each year the traditions at Bryan are embedded deeper into its culture. Three significant traditions that have developed since 2015 are: culture night, a spring play and, prom. Culture night is an evening event that takes place yearly to recognize and celebrate the unique cultures that are present every day at Bryan. The spring play was introduced in 2017 by English and Theatre teacher, Rachele Stoops, and is a one-act play that is performed during the last few weeks of the school year. Lastly, Bryan holds an annual prom in the school's gym, put together primarily by the school's student council. Bryan's prom looks similar to other schools prom in that there is a theme, decorations, music, and dancing. However, Bryan also offers a true community feeling in that nearly all of the staff attend, helping to set up, dance, and make sure each student has an enjoyable experience. Additionally, food and photography are provided at no additional cost to the student.

***Ceremonies.*** One of the greatest accomplishments in a person's life is often their high school graduation. While the students at Bryan have the option to walk with their assigned home high school, they also have the ability to walk as a graduate of the Bryan Community Focus Program. The ceremony takes place on the last day of the school year at a local high school, usually Lincoln East High School. The students join their classmates, staff members, and family and friends to discuss accomplishments, walk across the stage, and celebrate their victory. One

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

unique tradition that occurs at the ceremony is that after each graduate has walked across the stage, and received their diploma, they are greeted, hugged and/or high-fived by each of the teachers of Bryan. This unique part of the celebration demonstrates the passion, love, and pride that the teachers and students have for their school.

***Perception Data.*** The 2016-2017 Bryan perception data was collected from 257 Bryan parents through a Parent Perception Survey. Each survey was the same and included questions asking the parents perception of the curriculum, engagement, climate and relationships at Bryan. The culture sections largest strength indicated that 46% of the parents believed that students understand school-wide expectations. The Curriculum Instruction and Assessment section provided findings that 44% of all parents completing the survey strongly agreed that their student is challenged with learning experiences. The same section's weakness indicated that 18% of parents believed that teachers did not communicate with them regarding their students learning progress. In the Engagement section, 44% of parents surveyed strongly agreed that their students enjoyed participating in extracurricular activities. The Engagement section indicated that 15% of parents surveyed believed that their student does not complete assignments on time or study without reminders. Additionally, 15% of parents do not believe that their student gives their best effort academically. Lastly, in the relationship section, 44% of parents surveyed indicated that they strongly agreed that their student has one adult at Bryan that knows them and shows interest in his or her education. The same section relays that 16% of parents surveyed disagreed that all students of all cultural backgrounds contribute to the school community (Bryan SIP Profile, 2019).

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

### **Student Learning**

The ACT is a standardized exam testing academic proficiency in the subjects of math, science, reading, and English. This exam is taken by all eleventh graders at the Bryan Community Focus Program. During the 2016-2017 school year, 32 students took the ACT, and 31 students completed the exam. The average composite ACT score at Bryan was 15.9. The average English score was 13.6, average math score was 15.9, average reading score a 16.6, and the average science score was 16.5. The percentage of Bryan students who met the English Language Arts ACT expectations was 20%, compared to 53.9% at LPS and 52% overall in Nebraska. The number of Bryan students who met the science ACT expectations were 10%, compared to 55.5% at LPS and 54.0% of all Nebraska students. The percentage of Bryan students who met the math ACT expectations was 7.5%, compared to 52.6% at LPS and 50.0% of all Nebraska students (Bryan SIP Profile, 2019).

### **School Processes**

School processes include the programs that are being utilized within a school in an effort to show what the staff and school are doing to get the results they are getting (Bernhardt, 2016, p.10).

**Instructional Processes.** At Bryan, many instructional practices are at the discretion of the individual content teacher. Each teacher is responsible for organizing and implementing their own specific graded assignments, only requiring that summative academic work is weighted as 80% of the grade and formative work is weighted at 20% of the grade. With the exception of specific class district common assessments, which are outlined in any curriculum given directly from the district office, each content teacher is provided the opportunity to plan, teach and assess

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

student learning as they believe best fits the needs of their classroom. For most core classes, Lincoln Public Schools provides curriculum and instruction guidelines, but allows for flexibility in the planning and delivery of content.

A unique characteristic of the culture of Bryan is the lack of assigned homework. The traditional assigning of work outside of instructional time is uncommon at Bryan. Most frequently, if students have work to do outside of class it is due to missing a class. Also unique to Bryan is the necessity to take an e-learning or online course to complete all LPS graduation requirements. Depending on when the student arrives at Bryan, and which courses were previously taken at their home high school, it is necessary for most students to take at least one online course. An example of this would be the completion of a health class. However, the majority of classes are taught in a traditional classroom setting with one teacher providing direct instruction to a group setting.

Each student at the Bryan Community Focus Program is issued a district-provided Chromebook. The student is responsible for bringing this device to school with them each day. Each classroom teacher develops and uses the Google suite programs along with several other online academic tools for their classrooms.

**Organizational and Administrative Processes.** Each of the teachers at the Bryan Community Focus Program work closely together. While the school is divided into curriculum departments, these departments are only defined for the purpose of meeting district professional development the majority of teachers to content areas. The entire staff at Bryan work together during all professional development, and PLC's. Each of the individual departments work

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

together with the entire staff and/or district department specialists to implement specific curriculum changes and procedures (T. Penrod, personal communication, April 2019).

***Teacher Collaboration.*** As aligned with the six comprehensive Lincoln Public Schools high schools, Bryan students are dismissed at 2:00pm each Tuesday of the school year, so the staff of Bryan Community can meet in their PLC groups. The staff at Bryan meet as one large comprehensive group to collaborate and work towards school improvement and PLC goals. For one hour every Tuesday the staff at Bryan document progress on the students assigned to their learning labs. The staff are responsible for developing relationships with each of these students, monitoring their grades, and helping each of them to be successful at Bryan. The PLC time is dedicated to having the staff support the students through the Tier Two Intervention Criteria and Progression chart, developed by the Bryan Community administration. The appropriate Tier Two interventions that are discussed during PLC times are Learning Lab teacher check-in with the student, check-in with the school therapist and/or social worker, Learning Lab teacher phone calls home, student work on a Boys Town skill in the student support room, and a referral to the Tier Three team. Each of these steps is evaluated weekly during meetings and progressed only to a larger tier if necessary. Data is collected on every student, every week.

***Curriculum Development Process.*** Each of the classes taught at Bryan are aligned with corresponding academic classes at the other six comprehensive high schools within the Lincoln Public School District. Curriculum is written by curriculum committees within each individual department using a variety of department and class-specific members. These committees work closely together to develop and train the upcoming change in curriculum. They then train the

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

individual school departments and work together utilizing professional development time to perfect each new curriculum adoption.

***Professional Development Initiatives.*** Over the past several years, Bryan professional development has been centered on developing an understanding of the youth that is served there, specifically focusing on students who struggle with truancy, poor grades, have emotional pain, and or live with physical violence. Each year the staff participates in initiatives to develop a larger understanding of youth development and trauma-informed care. During the 2018-2019 school year, some examples of professional development included a Lincoln Public Schools cultural liaison panel speaking with Bryan staff to discuss the impact of immigration and how educators can support students who were not born in the United States. Additionally, the Bryan staff watched and discussed the documentary *Paper Tigers* (Pritzker, Redford, 2016) which follows the alternative high school, Lincoln High School, located in Walla Walla, Washington. The staff at Bryan also had the opportunity to meet and ask questions of a transgender adult who shared their experience and provided insight and advice on how to support transgender students. Lastly, Bryan staff were provided with training on suicide prevention, family trauma, and school safety presented by the school social worker and therapist.

***Teacher Evaluation and Supervision Process.*** Each certified teacher is assigned an administrator at the beginning of the year. While both administrators spend a significant amount of time with each teacher, only the teachers' assigned administrator is responsible for their evaluation and appraisal. If the teacher is completing the first three years of teaching (their probationary period), in Lincoln Public Schools, they are required to complete one formal observation and two informal observations each semester. After this time, the teacher is

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

permanent and while they continue to complete two informal observations each semester, they only complete one formal observation every other year.

Using Charlotte Danielson's framework for teaching, the assigned administrator uses a system called Pathwise and measures four components of professional practice: planning and preparation, classroom environment, professional responsibilities, and instruction. Each of these components are evaluated, documented, and discussed in a one-on-one post observation meeting between the teacher and administrator (T. Penrod, personal communication, April 2019).

***Instructional Model.*** In 2019, Lincoln Public Schools introduced an instructional design template that is to be used to assist educators with developing effective lesson(s). The model was designed based on the work of Charlotte Danielson, Anita Archer and *Classroom Instruction that Works*, written by Hubbell, Pitler, Stone (2012). The template is divided into four sections. The first is the development of a learning objective and lesson opener. The second section breaks the teaching portion of the lesson into three specific categories: teaching/modeling (I do), guided practice (we do), and independent practice (you do). The final component includes a lesson closure, that includes an evaluation of how you believe the student progressed towards the learning objective. On the right side of the template throughout each of the above-mentioned steps, the template encourages the teacher to include checks for understanding, opportunities to respond to questioning, and provide feedback. The template is provided both as a blank document to create powerful lessons, but also provides detailed descriptions and definitions of each of the steps outlined (T. Penrod, personal communication, April 2019).

***Attendance.*** Student achievement is significantly impacted based on the amount of time spent in class. During the 2016-2017 school year, the Bryan cumulative attendance percentage



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

was 74% in semester one and 72% in semester two. In the 2017-2018 school year, the Bryan cumulative attendance percentage was 70% and 69% respectively (Bryan SIP Profile). During the 2018-2019 first semester, Bryan served a total of 163 students. Fifteen students at Bryan displayed regular attendance (missing less than five school days), in that time frame. Bryan served 20 students with at-risk-attendance (missing less than ten school days), and 20 students with Chronic Attendance (missing less than fifteen school days.) Lastly, students who were categorized as having chronic attendance(missing more than fifteen school days) included 108 students (Bryan SIP Profile, 2019).

The LPS School district requires that after ten missed school days a collaborative plan which includes a detailed brainstorm and action plan in efforts to support the student in achieving better attendance must be completed.

**Programs.** Detailed below is an introductory description of the programs that were happening during the 2019-2020 school year at the Bryan Community Focus Program. This section details credit recovery, learning lab, the student support room, counseling services, the continuous school improvement process and the mission and vision at Bryan, explaining each program's function and purpose within the school.

***Credit Recovery.*** In order to assist in decreasing failure rates at Bryan, Bryan dedicates the afternoon of each of finals day for credit recovery. Credit recovery provides students who have earned at least a 50% in their class the opportunity to receive additional one-on-one help with their teachers. During this time, the students are encouraged to complete any missing assignments in an effort to increase their overall grade, in hopes of the student earning a passing grade.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

***Learning Lab.*** Each student at Bryan is enrolled in the same first-hour class entitled Learning Lab. Learning Lab is a thirty-minute block, that is credit-bearing, and provides students the opportunity to engage in PBiS lessons, practice restorative justice, and complete missing or upcoming assignments. Learning Lab students meet with the same teacher each day, but are also allowed to spend time with any teacher they need for additional assistance.

***Student Support Room.*** Bryan students are welcomed and encouraged to complete missing work, gain additional assistance on class work, and work on Boys Town Life Skills in the Bryan Support Room. This room is supervised and run by one of the two special education teachers at Bryan, as well as a paraeducator. This room provides students the opportunity to have a quiet area to work away from peers, take exams, receive additional help, or gain new skills using the Boys Town Life Skills framework.

***Counseling.*** Each student at the Bryan Community Focus Program is supported both by a school social worker and school therapist. Each of these mental health professionals assists in outlining specific individual needs, creates individual plans, and supports each and every student and family at Bryan. The social worker and therapist have an office within the school and spend the entire day throughout the school year supporting Bryan students. These professionals may also address specific school mental health needs such as the discussion of suicide prevention. They may provide group sessions to assist with a variety of mental health struggles by teaching life and social skills to the group members.

***Continuous School Improvement Processes.*** The Bryan Community Focus Program is currently a four -year program, and although the school is not accredited, it does follow all Lincoln Public School expectations as well as those of Rule 10. The current school goals set

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

forth by the school improvement plan is to increase student achievement. Over the last several years academic failure rates, (a student failing at least one class) have increased. During the 2014-2015 school year, 71% of all students were failing at least one class. In 2015-2016, that number increased slightly to 72%. The 2016-2017 school year increased to 83% of all students. The 2017-2018 school year had 87% of all students failing at least one class. During the 2018-2019 school year, the administration and staff implemented a 'Go 100' focus. This initiative encouraged all staff members to have the mindset that all students can pass all classes, with the equity focus of "See everyone, Reach everyone." The measurable objective for the 2018-2019 school year was "The number of students who fail at least one class will decrease from 87% to 0%" (Bryan SIP Profile, 2019).

The strategies that were implemented during the 2018-2019 school year to tackle the continuous improvement goal were the use of a redefined multi-tier system of support (MTSS), specifically changing the Tier Two interventions. The Tier Two Learning Lab tracking was used to increase the tracking of student data to properly move students in and out of interventions. Check point days were implemented, giving students one full school day every three weeks with no instruction with the intent of allowing students the time to complete make up work and earn incentives if work is completed. Learning Lab has been provided to all Bryan students since the 2014-2015 school year, and will continue to be a valued asset to the community. Staff are also encouraged to use PBiS strategies, including specific positive feedback and the issuing of Bryan Bucks, an in-school ticket incentive aimed at recognizing positive in-school behavior.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

The current school improvement goals for Bryan Community are aligned with the current Lincoln Public Schools District Goal: “Prepare ALL students to be college, career, and civic-life ready with a goal of 90% on-time graduation” (lps.org, n.d).

***School Mission: Bryan Community Focus Program.*** The mission statement for the students of the Bryan Community Focus Program is: Ensuring all students will achieve the necessary learning to be successful up to and beyond graduation (lps.org/Bryan, n.d.). This mission was developed with the rebranding of the program during the physical move in 2011. During this time Bryan was given specific school colors of blue and gold, the school mascot ‘Phoenix’, and a new mission and vision. The new vision for the program was developed with the collaborative work of the 2010-2011 Bryan Community staff. The mission is posted throughout the school, as well as spoken as a daily reminder during all school announcements which take place each morning during the Learning Lab.

### **Implications for Continuous School Improvement**

Through analysis of the data, strengths, and challenges at the Bryan Community Focus Program, it is apparent that improving the overall student attendance is a need. While Bryan has programs and procedures in place that help to establish their unique culture and helpful support to students, there are no current structured school attendance strategies, procedures, and programs that are used consistently.

The data also shows that Bryan ACT test scores in all core subject areas are lower than both LPS test scores and the overall scores of students in the State of Nebraska. While Bryan

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

students participate in the tenth grade pre-ACT day, there are currently no systems or procedures in place that formally prepare students for this exam.

The data shows that while failure rates at Bryan rose during the 2018-2019 school year, there is still significant growth to be made in order to reach the 2018-2019 Bryan Community Focus Program School Improvement Goal which was: The number of students who fail at least one class will decrease from 87% to 0% (Bryan SIP Profile, 2019).

The Bryan Community Focus Program would best benefit from a school improvement project that addressed procedures, programs and continuous improvements of efforts to increase daily student attendance. Another potential school improvement priority would be an evaluation of the established programs, and procedures that currently support decreasing the class failure rate among students at Bryan. It is also possible that lack of attendance has a significant impact on student failure rate and lower test scores. Therefore, addressing both attendance strategies as well as decreasing the student failure rate would make a significant impact on the success of students at the Bryan Community Focus Program.

## Chapter 2: Student Learning Data Analysis

### **Accountability Data Review**

During the 2018-2019 school year, The Bryan Community Focus Program's focal point was on 'Going 100', in efforts to increase student achievement through an increase in student failure rates. Lincoln Public Schools, including Bryan Community, implemented a district created instructional model template. Attendance rates at Bryan during the 2018-2019 school year decreased, with the school having no systematic procedures to support students who are chronically absent.

### **Student Learning Data**

During the 2018-2019 school year, Bryan implemented many strategies to address the school improvement goal of increasing student achievement. Interventions such as Check-point days, Learning-Lab, and professional development using the LPS instructional template were discussed and implemented. Unfortunately, during this same school year, failure rates remained consistent with previous years. During the 2018-2019, 87% of all students failed at least one academic class. During the first semester, the daily average attendance rate included 71% of all students having regular attendance, second semester of the same academic year included 72% of all students. The specific attendance goal for the 2018-2019 school year was to increase the Bryan cumulative attendance percentage from 69% to 76%. (SIP Profile, 2019).

**Strengths.** Bryan Community has many strengths. Among the school's strengths include a strong culture among staff and students that provide all students with the ability to receive a

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

fresh start upon entering the program. The students at Bryan believe that the staff cares about them and want them to be successful. Bryan includes several programs: learning lab, credit recovery, check-point days and a daily support room to provide constant academic and behavioral support. Bryan has smaller class sizes, averaging twelve students, in efforts to provide more academic one-on-one support from every teacher. Bryan also has mental health support from an on-site therapist, and social worker. Additionally, student-parents receive guidance from a parenting class, as well as the ability to enroll their children in the Student Child Learning Center.

**Challenges.** Bryan has many challenges. Statistically, the two points of potential growth are in attendance and failure rates. During the 2014-2015 school year, 71% of Bryan students were failing at least one class. This number has steadily increased having 87% of Bryan students during the 2017-2018 school year failing at least one class. Additionally, attendance rates have decreased over the last several years. During the 2016-2017 school year, the Bryan cumulative attendance percentage was 74% in semester one and 72% in semester two. In the 2017-2018 school year, the Bryan cumulative attendance percentage was 70% and 69% respectively (Bryan SIP Profile). During the 2018-2019 first semester, Bryan served a total of 163 students. Fifteen students at Bryan displayed regular attendance (missing five to ten school days), in that time frame. Bryan served 20 students with at-risk-attendance (missing less than ten school days), and 20 students with Chronic Attendance (missing ten to fifteen school days.) Lastly, students who were categorized as having chronic attendance(missing more than fifteen school days) included 108 students (Bryan SIP Profile, 2019).

**School Improvement Goals**

The 2018-2019 Bryan Community School Improvement Goals were to increase student achievement and for students to increase their future-ready planning. The goal to increase student achievement provided an all encompassing goal to increase student failure rates and lessen student absenteeism. The 2019-2020 Bryan Community focus was 'Every Student, Every Day'. In efforts to increase student achievement, and focus on supporting every student, every day, it was imperative that Bryan develops a school improvement goal that develops and implements an attendance program. Increasing student attendance would have a direct connection to the increase in student achievement, including a rise in student failure rates. Increased attendance also allows the student to engage in future-ready planning events and activities that develop these skills within the school day. Developing and implementing early attendance interventions address the challenge of low attendance rates and the high percentage of students failing at least one class.

**Student Learning Measures**

This section explains the unique school-based data that was used to understand the specific student needs at the Bryan Community Focus Program. An assessment inventory was created and used to detail every assessment that was used during the 2018-2019 school year at Bryan. The assessment inventory will provide a more indepth look into the challenges at Bryan.



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

The assessment data that applied directly to the 2019-2020 Bryan Community student improvement goal of students increasing their academic achievement are detailed in this section. (See appendix G.)

### **Period Attendance List**

The Bryan Center School Period Attendance List provides a list of student attendance by school day, and class period. The attendance of each student is recorded every day, during every class period, by the assigned class instructor. The attendance list can provide information for a specific day, or cumulative for an entire school year. The attendance list provides the exact date and class period the student was absent, as well as a running total of days the student has not been present in all assigned classes. The Period Attendance List is not a classroom- based assessment, rather an accountability check of how many days a student has been in each of their classes. Tracking attendance is critical in developing a procedure to support the increase of student achievement. Attendance data provides the attendance team with a list of specific students who would benefit from specific attendance support and interventions, based on the direct amount of days the student has missed. The attendance list has several categories in which attendance data can be collected. The categories include dates in attendance, and definition of absence.

### **Failure Rates: Student Improvement Profile**

The Bryan Community Student Improvement Profile provides statistical data, including a detailed analysis of failure rates. These rates include an overall failure rate of all students each

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

semester, students who are failing at least one academic class, and students who failed at least one class by demographic and age group. (See appendix H.)

### **Continuous Improvement Goal: Bryan 2019-2020**

The 2019-2020 Continuous Improvement Goal tracking sheet includes baseline data that is determined by the improvement team, to be essential in progressing to the improvement goal. Baseline data, a hypothesis for the cause of the data, and measurable outcomes are established for each of the improvement goals. Failing grades and attendance rates are listed as having a direct correlation with Bryan's student academic achievement.

### **Problem Development**

According to the Bryan Community School Improvement Profile, one of the 2019-2020 Bryan school goals was that students will increase their academic achievement. Student attendance is directly related to student success. In order to best serve the chronically absent students at Bryan, a new attendance program needed to be developed, implemented and analyzed. This section explains the school improvement reasoning and rationale of this project, through the use of the inventory assessment data.

### **School Improvement Project Parameters**

The focus of this project targeted all ninth and tenth grade students at Bryan Community. The students directly impacted by this project were the students who reached three, five and ten days of school absences during the 2019-2020 school year. The 2019-2020 school goal this project focused on students increasing their academic achievement.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

**Targeted teachers and students.** According to the Bryan Center School Student Total, found in Synergy, as of September 12, 2019, there were 162 students enrolled for the 2019-2020 academic school year. Out of the total number of students, 26 of these students were 9th or 10 graders. This project focused strictly on the 9th and 10th graders enrolled at Bryan Community during the 2019-2020 school year. Targeting these students provides early interventions that correspond with the regulations of the Nebraska County Attorney's office- which supports holding students at or under the age of 16 legally accountable for their academic attendance. No classroom teachers, or staff members, outside of the attendance team will participate in this project. The attendance team met weekly to discuss the developed attendance program and each of the 9th and 10th grade students, as they gain three, five, and ten days of absenteeism. The attendance team, which was composed of Bryan's social worker, school therapist, principal, registrar, coordinator and author will focus on developing and implementing an attendance program for all ninth and tenth graders at Bryan during the 2019-2020 school year.

**Targeted school improvement goal.** The Bryan Community 2019-2020 school improvement goal that was addressed through this school improvement project was the increase of student academic achievement. During the 2018-2019 Bryan Community school year, 28% of all students were chronically absent. (Bryan SIP Profile, 2019). Student achievement is accomplished only when students are present in class, therefore the theory in action is that an increase in attendance will directly impact each student's academic achievement. The attendance team collected and analyzed attendance data each week, using the period attendance list, focusing specifically on ninth and tenth graders at Bryan. The attendance team worked to increase the 9th grade attendance rates up from 87.51% (Enrollment Summary Report, 2019) and

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

10th grade attendance rates up from 84.72% (Enrollment Summary Report, 2019). The focus on early interventions was to assist each struggling student in creating and implementing healthy school attendance habits, prior to their 11th or 12th grade year. This way, as these students become upperclassmen, they can continue to be frequent attenders contributing to their on time high school graduation.

### **Project Learning Data Analysis**

For this school improvement project, the author examined the Lincoln Public Schools, Bryan Center School, Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Enrollment Summary Reports both by grade and demographics, the Bryan SIP Profile, and the 2019-2020 Bryan Community Continuous Improvement Goal Planning Sheet.

**2019-2020 Bryan Community Continuous Improvement Goal Planning.** As part of the school improvement plan, student academic achievement has been measured for several years. During the 2014-2015 academic year, Bryan students had 226 failing grades and 72% of all students classified as regular attenders. The numbers continued to increase and peaked during the 2016-2017 school year, as Bryan students had 466 failing grades and continued to have 72% of all students as regular attenders. The total number of students during the 2016-2017 academic school year with at least one failing class was 83% of the student population. During the 2018-2019 academic school year, semester two, failing grade total was 204 failing classes, equating to 75% of the student population failing at least one academic class. During this same school year, 72% of all students were consistent with regular attendance (SIP Profile, 2019).

**Average Daily Attendance Enrollment Summary Report: Grades 9, 10, 11,12.** During the 2018-2019 academic school year at Bryan Community, 87.51% of all 9th graders and 84.72%

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

of all 10th graders were present each day. Additionally, 77.34% of 11th graders and 71.60% of all 12th graders were in attendance each academic day. The average total student attendance rate was 76.08%. (Enrollment Summary, 2019; See appendix I).

### **Average Daily Attendance Enrollment Summary Report: Race and Ethnicity.**

During the 2018-2019 academic school year at Bryan Community, White students, at 74.62% were the highest attenders. Hispanic students attended 72.12 % of the school year and American Indian or Alaska Native Students attended school 72.26% of the time. African American students were in attendance 70.68% of the time. Asian students attended 50.15% of the time and students who are of two or more races were present 67.41% of the school year. There were no Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students at Bryan during the 2018-2019 school year. (Enrollment Summary, 2019; See appendix J).

### **Classroom-Based Learning Data**

During the 2018-2019 school year, 75% of the Bryan student population were failing at least one class, for a total of 226 classes. The total average attendance rates for Bryan students during the same year was 76.08%. Classroom attendance for the targeted student group was reviewed weekly at the attendance team meeting. Total number of failing grades were monitored and evaluated every marking period of the 2019-2020 school year.

### **Statement of Problem**

Upon the analysis of the Student Improvement Profile data, specifically attendance percentages and the number of students failing at least one class, it was evident that students at Bryan Community Focus Program consistently struggled with attendance and earning all

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

attempted credits. It was hypothesized that by providing students with the skills and support to increase attendance, regular attendance would positively impact the high class failure rates.

### **Current Instructional Reality**

This section will detail the historical and current instructional practices in regards to student attendance at Bryan Community. The purpose of this section is to analyze the practices and interventions that are currently in place to support the increase of student achievement.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

Bryan Community prides itself on the positive professional relationships that staff and students share. Relationship building is embedded deeply into the culture at Bryan Community. These relationships strengthen conversations, team building and informal discussions surrounding attendance and failing grades. Formally, during Learning Lab, each Tuesday Bryan students were presented with Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) lessons that provide the students with guidance and knowledge on the importance of attending school regularly and completing course work. Each class offered at Bryan Community follows the same curriculum as each of six Lincoln Public Schools comprehensive high schools. During the 2018-2019 school year there was not formalized attendance curriculum or instruction pertaining specifically to attendance. During the spring 2019 school semester Bryan students completed an Anonymous Student Survey on Causes of Absenteeism, out of 64 anonymous surveys, 39 students said the main reason for missing school was due to a cold, headache, toothache, or other minor or moderate illness. 20 other students reported feeling anxious or depressed.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

### **Interventions**

During the 2018-2019 school year, there were no systematic attendance procedures and interventions at Bryan. During the same year, Bryan Community did have an attendance team, which included the principal, administrative coordinator, registrar, school social-worker and school therapist. The team met on available Friday mornings to discuss and support students in an unsystematic way. During the weekly attendance meetings, the attendance team would decide who would check in with the chronic absent students and make individual student plans. The attendance team would determine which students will complete a Lincoln Public Schools Collaborative Attendance Plan after missing ten school days. After the completion of this plan, which provides insight to barriers in the students' attendance, as well as potential support to assist with attendance, the team would decide if the chronically absent student should be referred to the county attorney, to be held legally accountable for their attendance. This unsystematic approach, accompanied by the amount of students who reached ten missing school days quickly became overwhelming to the attendance team, and therefore resulted in inconsistent completion of collaborative attendance plans and county attorney accountability.

### **Best Practice Focus Questions**

In efforts to increase student achievement, it is necessary for students to be physically present during the academic school day. As the data shows, many students are chronically absent during the academic school day, which is contributing to the steady high number of failing grades among students at Bryan. The following questions will help guide the research:

- Why are students frequently absent?
- Why do students not want to attend school?

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

- What are other schools in Lincoln Public Schools doing to support attendance?
- Will attendance have a large impact on student achievement?

### **Project Questions**

The above questions have led to the development of project questions to best support increased attendance rates.

- Will the development and implementation of a systematic attendance approach during the 9th and 10 grade years increase attendance both in the current academic year and throughout the students high school career?
- Is intervening with only 9th and 10th grade students enough to increase overall student achievement at Bryan?



### Chapter 3: Review of Best Practices

#### **Introduction**

In efforts to increase student attendance the Bryan Community, it is necessary for students to be physically present during the academic school day. As the data shows, many students are chronically absent during the academic school day, which is contributing to the steady high number of failing grades among students at Bryan. This chapter details three attendance strategies that are focused on the development of increasing attendance knowledge to students and parents in efforts of increasing student achievement, through an increase in attendance. The attendance strategies described in this chapter include: sending an attendance letter, establishing and maintaining an attendance celebration, and the development of a check and connect to increase positive student relationships at school.

### Strategy Review 1

**Title:** Attendance Letter

**Citation:** Sprick, R. Sprick, J. 2019. *School Leader's Guide to Tackling Attendance Challenges*. Alexandria, Virginia: Ancora.

#### Research Summary

The attendance letter strategy is a tier-one intervention designed to inform parents and guardians and students about the importance of regular attendance. The letter is an inviting correspondence aimed at providing support to each student and their family. The brief letter would include a welcoming note, a definition of regular attendance, information explaining the importance of regular attendance, and define the expectation of student attendance at the Bryan Community Focus Program, as well as the state and district attendance policies. The letter would include last year's attendance rates, as well as an attendance goal for the 2020 spring semester. The letter would close with an attendance tracking chart, as well as information with who to reach out to with questions.

#### Analysis of Strategy

This strategy aligns with the Bryan Community Focus Program student improvement goal of increasing student achievement. Being present in school is one of the greatest ways a student can increase their academic performance. This intervention would provide all students and families with the same information, informing them about the importance of everyday attendance and information about how to reach out should they need help in supporting their students presence at school.

## Strategy Review 2

**Title:** Celebration of Attendance

**Citation:** Sprick, R. Sprick, J. 2019. *School Leader's Guide to Tackling Attendance Challenges*. Alexandria, Virginia: Ancora.

### Research Summary

The Celebration of Attendance Strategy is a tier-one intervention that works to celebrate the attendance of regular attending students. The attendance team should meet and determine the specific qualifications of the celebration to include attendance requirements, data recording and the celebration specifications. The attendance team should consider their school culture in both its current reality and what they would like the culture to be surrounding attendance norms. The authors suggest that the school should not strive for perfect attendance but rather calculate a regular attending school day number that is more realistic for students to obtain. Additionally, the authors suggest having a visual display recognizing the current attendance data either as an entire school or in specific classrooms. The authors suggest having motivators for both staff and students to create a positive outlook and participation in the collection of data and increase of attendance. Lastly, at the predetermined specific time, the school should provide all regular attending students with a certificate congratulating the students attendance as well as an actual celebration.

### Analysis of Strategy

This strategy aligns with the Bryan Community Focus Program student improvement goal of increasing student achievement. This strategy is more than just the final celebration, it includes the frequent display of weekly attendance data as well as a way to show enthusiasm about attendance and frequently reteach attendance expectations. Lastly, this strategy allows for all students who have regular attendance to be positively recognized and celebrated.

### Strategy Review 3

**Title:** Check and Connect

**Citation:** Kearney, C.A. (2016) *Managing School Absenteeism at Multiple Tiers An Evidence-Based and Practical Guide for Professionals*. NY, NY: Oxford University Press.

#### Research Summary

The Check and Connect strategy would be used as a tier two intervention that focuses on building positive relationships between the school and any students who are frequently absent. This strategy provides the struggling student with a mentor, who can build a positive, trusting relationship. Mentorship could be formal, with a teacher or with a peer, all dependent on the individual needs of the struggling student. The mentorship should include a weekly-individual meeting with the student, a discussion of school and home challenges, and development of strategies to regulate behaviors and make positive decisions. Additional mentor-mentee support could include phone calls home, and escorting students to class. Each mentor-mentee relationship would be individually established and managed.

#### Analysis of Strategy

This strategy aligns with Bryan Community student improvement goals of increasing student achievement. This strategy works to help the individual students who are struggling with attendance. Establishing significant relationships and making a positive school connection may assist the students in their desire to be comfortable and attend school.

### **Summary**

For this project, the *Check and Connect* strategy was selected as the method that was used to increase student achievement. This strategy was selected as the attendance team acknowledged the need for a one-on-one system that helped students build healthy habits as they arrived at Bryan, rather than implement strategies after the student missed academic instruction. The Check and Connect strategy began at the beginning of the 2019-2020 Spring semester with all new Bryan Community students, particularly students who struggled with attendance at their home high school. This strategy allowed for each new Bryan student to establish a one-on-one mentorship with an adult at the Bryan Community Focus Program. This relationship was built through a weekly check in while the adult and student worked on establishing a connection that allowed the adults to implement specific attendance interventions.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Chapter 4: Plan of Action

**Introduction**

In efforts to increase student attendance at The Bryan Community Focus Program, it is necessary for students to be physically present during the academic school day. As the data shows, many students at Bryan are chronically absent during the academic school day, which is contributing to the steady high number of failing grades among students at Bryan. The *Check and Connect* (Kearney, 2016) Bryan attendance intervention was designed to provide early interventions to support new-to Bryan students during the 2019-2020 second semester. The intervention included a Three-Day one-on-one meeting with the student and attendance team member, discussing the student's absence and any barriers that are keeping the student from getting to school. If the student reached five missed attendance days, the student began weekly check-ins with the assigned attendance member. During the check-ins, the attendance team member and student discuss the students attendance barriers, reasons for absence, discuss any assistance the school can provide, as well as set an attendance goal. This *Check and Connect*, continued until the student reached ten days of absence, or until the student had steady attendance for four academic weeks.

**Plan of Action Analysis**

The development and implementation of a systematic attendance approach for new-to Bryan students, in efforts of increasing academic achievement through increased attendance, was implemented by the 2019-2020 Bryan attendance team. The attendance team consisted of the researcher, and seven other Bryan staff members: Kim Peters, Registrar, Tanner Penrod, Principal, Denise Craig, Instructional Coordinator, Cyndi Miller, Bryan Community Health

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

Technician, Cheryl Wilkins, Media Specialist and Instructional Coach, Gabby Danner, Bryan School Social Worker, and Dwight Brown, Bryan Community Therapist. In order to effectively lead the team and manage a plan, the researcher held a weekly attendance meeting on Friday mornings. The initial attendance meeting occurred on January 10, 2020. During this time, the researcher presented the attendance *Check and Connect* intervention. The researcher provided a spread-sheet that included each of the attendance intervention google form links and discussed each step of the attendance strategy in detail. The team agreed to begin the attendance interventions at the following week's meeting that was held on January 17, 2020. Each attendance team member agreed to reference the 'Renee Check-In' spreadsheet to see which students they were assigned to, should they not be able to attend the weekly attendance meeting (Renee Check-In SpreadSheet 2020, See appendix K). During each of the attendance meetings, the Bryan Registrar, Kim Peters, presented each student who had reached three or more missed days of school. If the student was new to the attendance intervention, and reached three missed school days, the student would be assigned an attendance team member. The attendance team members would meet one-on-one with the student and complete the three-day attendance form (3-Day Attendance Form 2020, See appendix L). If the student reached five missed academic days, the paired attendance team member would again meet with the student, this time completing the *Check and Connect* google form (Check and Connect Form 2020, See appendix M). During each weekly meeting all new-to Bryan student attendance was analyzed. After five missed attendance days, the students continued to receive a weekly *Check and Connect* one-on-one attendance check-in by their assigned attendance team member.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

During the January 24, 2020 attendance meeting, the new-to Bryan students who had reached three or more missed attendance days were discussed and check-in's were allocated among the attendance team members. The Attendance Team met every Friday, with the exception of January 17th, as there was a Lincoln Public School snow day. On January 24, 2020, Kim Peters, and the researcher met and discussed the attendance for the New-to Bryan students for the last two academic weeks. The researcher completed all necessary three-day check-ins prior to the January 31, 2020 attendance meeting. The Attendance Team continued to meet on February 7, 2020, February 14, 2020, and February 21, 2020. Each meeting consisted of Attendance Team members discussing the attendance of each new-to Bryan and allocating their *Check and Connect* current and future steps.

During the January 10, 2020 initial attendance team meeting, there were two significant changes that occurred (Plan of Action Planner 2020, See appendix N). The Bryan Community Principal, Tanner Penrod, suggested that the original five-day attendance check-in was not an early enough intervention. The attendance team agreed and the five-day check-in form was renamed as the three-day check-in form. The information gathered was the same, however, the intervention would begin earlier. The second change that occurred was, instead of completing this intervention on all ninth and tenth grade students at Bryan, the Attendance Team proposed and decided to dedicate the *Check and Connect* strategy to the thirty-two, new-to Bryan students, who transferred to Bryan Community from the other six comprehensive LPS High Schools, at the beginning of the second-semester of the 2019-2020 academic school year. This change was made in effort to complete the intervention with fidelity, rather than become overwhelmed by the historical volume of potential attendance participants (Plan of Action Report 2020, See



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

Appendix O). Each of the students who participated in the *Check and Connect* intervention was provided an Institution Review Board (IRB) letter, in the mail, detailing the attendance procedures and data collection, as required by the Lincoln Public School District. This document provided all new-to Bryan students the ability to disengage from this project (IRB Form 2020, See appendix P).

## Chapter 5: Results

### Introduction

In efforts to increase student attendance at The Bryan Community Focus Program, it is necessary for students to be physically present during the academic school day. As the data shows, many students at Bryan were chronically absent during the academic school day, which was contributing to the steady high number of failing grades among students at Bryan. The *Check and Connect* (Kearney, 2016) Bryan attendance intervention was designed to provide early interventions to support new-to Bryan students during the 2019-2020 second semester. The intervention included a three-day one-on-one meeting with the student and attendance team members, discussing the student's absence and any barriers that were keeping the student from getting to school. If the student reached five missed attendance days, the student began weekly check-ins with the assigned attendance member. During the check-ins, the attendance team member and student discussed the student's attendance barriers, reasons for absence, discussed any assistance the school can provide, as well as set an attendance goal. This *Check and Connect*, continued until the student reached ten days of absence, or until the student had steady attendance for four academic weeks.

### Results

In order to determine the effectiveness during the *Check and Connect* intervention between January 10, 2020 and February 21, 2020, 32 new-to Bryan students daily attendance rates, and academic grades were analyzed. Attendance rates were evaluated by grade, ethnicity, and the researcher calculated how many failing grades each of the student participants had during

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

the intervention dates. The researcher then compared the results to the equivalent 2018-2019 data sources.

### **Check and Connect Daily Attendance Rates by Academic Grade**

During the *Check and Connect* Attendance Strategy implementation at Bryan Community, 71.05% of all 12th graders and 89.50% of all 11th graders were in attendance each of the intervention days. Seventy-seven.seventy-seven percent of all 10th graders and 55.33% of all 9th graders were present during the thirty-two day attendance intervention time. The average daily attendance for all new-to Bryan students was 73.41%. The 2018-2019 data shows that the average attendance rate was 76.08%. Therefore, an increase of 2.67% of attendance rates were present in the previous school year. (Check and Connect Daily Attendance Rates by Academic Grade, See appendix Q).

### **Check and Connect Average Daily Attendance Rates by Student Demographics**

During the *Check and Connect* attendance strategy implementation at Bryan Community, the 32 new-to Bryan student data was calculated by student demographics. African American students, at 83.50%, were the highest attenders. Students with two or more ethnicities attended an average of 80%, Asian students 79%, White students 72.35%. Hispanic students attended 69.55% days and American Indian or Alaska Native students were present 67.33% of the academic intervention days. (Check and Connect Average Daily Attendance Rates by Ethnicity, See appendix R. During the 2018-2019 academic school year, white students, at 74.62% were the highest attenders. Therefore, a decrease of white students attendance of 2.27% was present. Additionally, there was a decrease in attendance by Hispanic students by 2.57% and American Indian or Alaska native by 4.93%. An increase of attendance by African American students by

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

12.82%, Asian students, by 28.85% and an increase of 12.9% by students with two or more ethnicities.

### **Check and Connect Students with One or More Failing Grades**

During the *Check and Connect* Attendance Strategy implementation at Bryan Community, twenty-four of the thirty-two students, or 75%, were failing at least one academic class at the *Check and Connect* end date, of February 21, 2020. Two students were failing five classes, six students were failing four classes, five students were failing three classes, four students were failing two classes and seven students were failing only one class. This leaves eight of the thirty-two students who were not failing any academic classes. (Check and Connect Class Failure Rate, See appendix S) The average failure rate during the 2018-2019 academic school year, was also 75%, therefore keeping the academic class failure rate exactly the same.

### **Themes**

During the *Check and Connect* Attendance Intervention, many data points stayed the same, or even increased in comparison to the 2018-2019 Bryan Community academic school year. While the average of students who were failing at least one class remained exactly the same, the average total of students present decreased. However, in each of these data points, the average numbers remained very similar, therefore indicating an overall daily attendance average of 74.74% between the 2018-2019 academic school year and the 2020 *Check and Connect* intervention dates.

## Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

### Introduction

In efforts to increase student attendance at The Bryan Community Focus Program, it was necessary for students to be physically present during the academic school day. As the data shows, many students at Bryan were chronically absent during the academic school day, which was contributing to the steady high number of failing grades among students at Bryan. The *Check and Connect* (Kearney, 2016) Bryan attendance intervention was designed to provide early interventions to support new-to Bryan students during the 2019-2020 second semester. The intervention included a three- day one-on-one meeting with the student and attendance team member, discussing the student's absence and any barriers that were keeping the student from getting to school. If the student reached five missed attendance days, the student began weekly check-ins with the assigned attendance member. During the check-ins, the attendance team member and student discussed the student's attendance barriers, reasons for absence, discussed any assistance the school could provide, as well as set an attendance goal. This *Check and Connect*, continued until the student reached ten days of absence, or until the student had steady attendance for four academic weeks.

### Conclusions

The *Check and Connect* attendance intervention provided statistical insight regarding the impact of this particular attendance strategy, in an effort to increase student academic achievement through increased school presence. The conclusions section provides reflection and closure to the researcher's student improvement project.

**Check and Connect: What Worked**

In reflection, many things about the *Check and Connect* strategy provided great progress towards increasing student presence at school. This intervention provided the Bryan Community Attendance Team with an attendance framework and an actionable intervention to work towards the school's 2019-2020 Student Improvement Goal of increasing student achievement. The strategies' digital forms created consistently created easy access. The forms provided talking points and easy data entry accessibility to all attendance team members.

**Check and Connect: What Did Not Work**

In reflection, the researcher, for future attendance interventions would structure the attendance team differently and manage communication more frequently. Having seven staff members actively responsible for each of the strategies and its implementation proved to be difficult for complete fidelity and follow-through. Allocating these staff members to specific student improvement interventions, rather than assigning each staff member a few tasks in each intervention, would allow for these individuals to become experts and develop a consistent form of communication and discussion regarding the intervention. The researcher would also increase the attendance casual check ins, understanding that for many attendance members, this intervention was a significant second-order change.

**Project Questions Answered**

During the first attendance meeting, the attendance team agreed to include all new-to Bryan students, rather than just 9th and 10th grade students. The reasoning behind this decision arose from the project question concerning the impact the intervention would have on all

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

students. Through the inclusion of all grade levels, the researcher was able to have insight regarding the overall development of student achievement, rather than just achievement of the underclassmen. The question regarding the long term impact of student attendance, and attendance remained unanswered. Through the continued implementation of the *Check and Connect* strategy, the Bryan Community attendance team will be able to continuously evaluate the long term impact of student-staff relationship building can have on attendance and overall student success.

### **Project Goals**

The *Check and Connect* project goals were to develop and implement a systematic attendance approach for new-to Bryan students, in efforts of increasing academic achievement through increased attendance. The *Check and Connect* strategy was designed to impact attendance through the discussion of personal student attendance and academic goals, as well as through establishing intentional positive staff and student relationships. This strategy continued for the duration of the 2020 academic school year to see the true impact of daily attendance rates and academic failure rates. The researcher believed that with time, the relationships developed between the students who frequently missed school and their assigned attendance team members would equate to increased attendance rates and the goal of increased achievement would be present.

### **Resolution of Problem Statement**

While the *Check and Connect* intervention data did not indicate an increase of student achievement, the Bryan Community Attendance team continued to implement the intervention

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

through the duration of the 2020 academic school year. A continued implementation of this strategy allowed for additional data to be collected and analyzed to continue to reflect and learn the long-term impact of this attendance strategy.

### **Impact on Student Learning**

The *Check and Connect* intervention provided each of the student participants the opportunity to establish a relationship with a trusted school adult. This relationship provided support for attendance and any other need the student may have. Talking weekly with an administrator or school social worker allowed for students to feel safe and cared for, providing them more time to focus on academics, and therefore increasing their individual student learning. Additionally, educators throughout the Bryan Community had the opportunity to focus on teaching their classes, knowing that they had support from the attendance team, to help students who were frequently absent from their classes. Teachers felt supported allowing them to focus on developing engaging curriculum and instruction, rather than managing outside of classroom behaviors.

### **Impact on Student Improvement**

The *Check and Connect* attendance strategy provided the Bryan attendance team with a framework, with universal steps to implement an attendance intervention. Additionally, the *Check and Connect* intervention allowed Bryan attendance team members to build intentional weekly relationships with students who were struggling at least with attendance, but often with academics as well. Continued check-ins with students allowed students to establish relationships with individuals that may not have positive adult connections at Bryan Community.



### **Recommendations**

The recommendations sections provide insight and reflection about the *Check and Connect* strategy. The researcher details her recommendations below.

#### **Information Usage**

The information and data collected during the *Check and Connect* intervention period was used by the Bryan attendance team. The Bryan administrators used the data presented to analyze the impact of the intervention, to ensure that the strategy was being used with fidelity, and examine the need to add to or take away any part of the strategy. The researcher used this opportunity to reflect on the implementation process of school improvement, as well as to talk confidently about attendance strategies and the necessity of their interventions.

#### **Additional Questions**

During implementation, the researcher developed several questions, about the school improvement process, as well as how to strengthen the attendance strategy. The following questions were reflected on by the researcher:

- How can we strengthen the attendance intervention, especially relating to including tier-one attendance interventions?
- How could the researcher support the attendance team to increase fidelity with documentation and check-in completion among all attendance team members?
- How could the researcher provide frequent updates to Bryan Community educators and staff, to provide transparency to tier-two interventions?

**Recommendations**

As the researcher of the *Check and Connect* intervention, I recommend completing this intervention for an entire academic school year. The primary focus on this intervention is built on the foundation of solid student relationships with a trusting school adult; developing relationships takes time in order to be most effective. Additionally, I would make the attendance team smaller. Having a few dedicated attendance team members, would provide easier opportunities for team meetings, as well as informal check-in's to access the weekly intervention progress. Lastly, I would recommend discussing the intervention to staff prior to the presentation of results. This way, the staff would have the knowledge to reach out to an attendance team member, should they become privy to information that may influence staff academic or attendance information.

**Project Next Steps**

The project continued through the 2019-2020 second semester at Bryan Community. The project was completed using the exact intervention that was detailed in this paper. Prior to implementing this strategy for future school years, the researcher will make a different check-in spreadsheet, to provide a more fluid way to document the completion of the check-ins. During future implementation dates, the researcher will also provide more communication throughout the week, before the attendance meetings, to ensure the completion of each of the check-ins.

**Information Presented**

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

The *Check and Connect* project was presented to the Bryan Community staff at the April 2020 staff meeting. The researcher also presented this project and its results to Cadre 38 of the Educational Leadership Program at Doane University in April of 2020. Each time the project was presented the researcher detailed the need for an attendance intervention at Bryan Community, the details of the intervention, as well as the results regarding student attendance and the impact on the new-to Bryan students academic performance.

### **Learning Reflection**

The learning reflection sections provide insight and reflection about the *Check and Connect* strategy. The researcher details her learnings during this school improvement project below.

#### **Working and Leading a Team**

My largest take-away regarding working with and leading a team, includes the need for a consistent time to discuss the intervention. One of the greatest barriers to providing the *Check and Connect* strategy with fidelity, included the inability to have the entire team together each week. While at these meetings, it took me several weeks before I became comfortable providing feedback and direction to individuals whom I have seen as my leaders for several years. In the future, I would take ownership and lead the team much sooner than I did during this intervention cycle.

#### **Learned about Using Data**

Prior to this project, I had not spent much time analyzing data, in regards to developing and implementing a specific plan. Without having specific numbers, I had a significant hunch

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

that my school improvement plan would be related to attendance and failing grades. However, I was unaware of the actual amount of students that were consistently gone from their classes.

Analyzing data allowed me to have a deeper understanding as to why our school was consistently trying attendance strategies, but was also frequently overwhelmed with the sheer volume of attendance needs.

### **Learning about Researching and Best Practice**

I enjoyed researching attendance strategies. I have a much better appreciation for the strategies that my administration have implemented, and now understand the vast importance of completing significant research prior to just making a plan and hoping that it works out. Learning about and referencing past attendance strategies allowed me to make intentional decisions about how to make the most positive impact on raising student achievement through the increase of student attendance.

### **Learned about Leading School Improvement**

I learned that school improvement is a large theme, in which many stakeholders do not agree. As a person who has not always valued data collection or taking adequate time prior to implementation of change, I now completely understand each of their purposes. Having data allows educational leaders to justify where the changes need to happen, as well as provides plans as to how the actions are effective. Additionally, I learned that school improvement takes time; time to develop, time to educate other school personnel and time to measure. School improvement is not a small fix that helps students instantly, but rather a long term solution to positively impact all students.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

### **Learned about Being a Leader**

Through the school improvement project, I learned that I have the skills and abilities to be an educational leader. I have the courage to research, implement and measure change. I have the ability to systematically impact many, if not all students at the school where I work; I have learned the definition of respect being earned and not granted, as I had to show my passion and dedication to the *Check and Connect* intervention. I had to earn the right to have school personnel spend their time implementing this time intensive project.

### **Balanced Leadership**

The researcher used several Balanced Leadership skills while working on this school improvement project. One of the largest responsibilities I used and incorporated was to optimize quality. In order to adequately implement an attendance strategy at Bryan, I needed to have a high amount of optimism and positive thinking. I had to provide a systematic strategy that provided ease and clear steps to the attendance team, as we knew we would be provided the opportunity to use the strategy with many of our students at Bryan. Utilizing the communication responsibility, I learned to communicate using strategies that were not just verbal. Providing the attendance team with a spreadsheet and google forms to fill out during student check-ins, provided the team members with the ability to communicate with each other and me. An additional responsibility I used during this project was the ability to monitor and evaluate the progress of the *Check and Connect* strategy before, during and after implementation.

### **Field Notes**

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

I learned that everything in leadership needs a system. The systems that were given to me in efforts to assure my organization, were critical in helping me complete this project on time. The field notes were incredibly helpful in providing detailed notes and keeping accurate data during implementation. I was diligent about recording notes during every attendance meeting, every student check-in, and every independent conversation that occurred outside of the weekly meeting.

### **Next Steps in Leadership**

I will continue to implement the *Check and Connect* attendance strategy at Bryan Community. Additionally, I will consistently work to build strategies that support the development and academic success of all students. I will work to support teachers and develop systems that work towards the success of all individuals within the Bryan Community.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

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## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix A

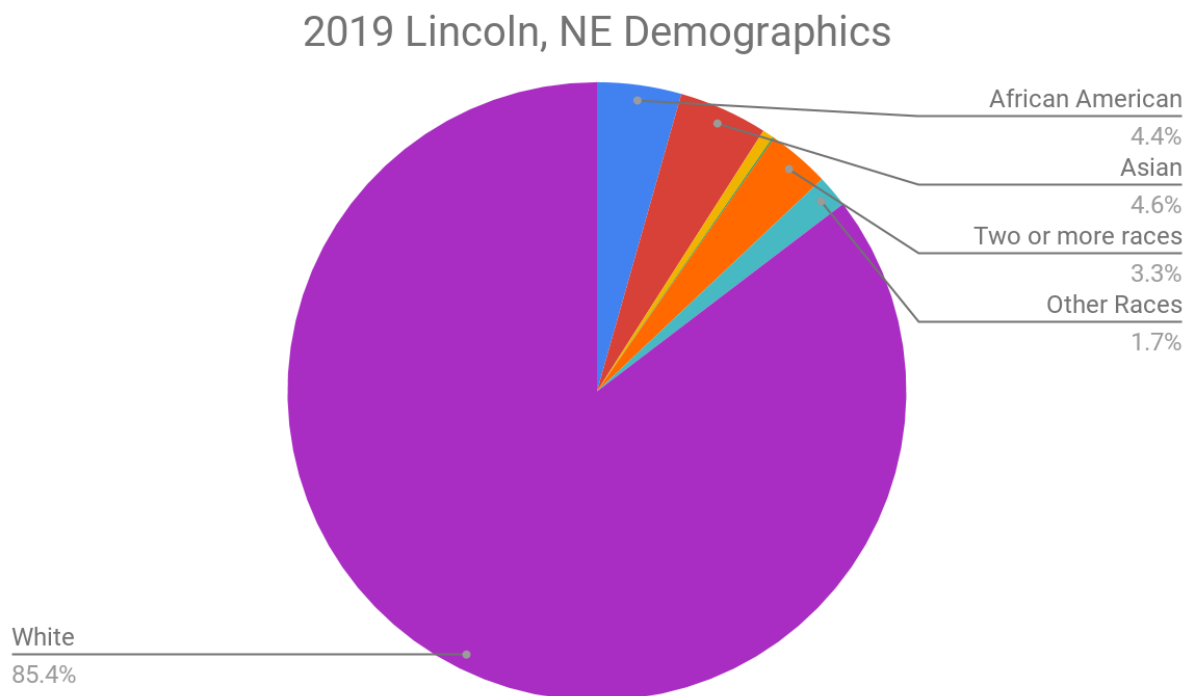
| Date           | Actions Completed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 2019     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gathered and analyzed data on the city of Lincoln, Nebraska, Lincoln Public Schools, and Bryan Community Focus Program.</li> <li>● Interviewed Tanner Penrod, principal of Bryan Community Focus Program.</li> </ul> |
| May 2019       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Began writing of rough draft of Chapter 1</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                 |
| July 2019      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Completed data displays for Chapter 1</li> <li>● Completed writing of rough draft of Chapter 1</li> </ul>                                                                                                            |
| August 2019    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Completed research for Chapter 2</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                          |
| September 2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Began and completed writing of rough draft of Chapter 2</li> <li>● Completed data displays for Chapter 2</li> </ul>                                                                                                  |
| October 2019   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Began and completed writing of rough draft of Chapter 3</li> <li>● Revised Chapter 2</li> </ul>                                                                                                                      |
| November 2019  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Revise Chapters 2 and 3</li> <li>● Implementation Plan of Action</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                          |
| December 2019  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prepared for implementation, generated forms and attendance team.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                         |
| January 2020   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implemented Check and Connect attendance strategy</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                         |
| February 2020  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implemented Check and Connect attendance strategy</li> <li>● Completed Chapter 4</li> <li>● Completed Chapter 5</li> </ul>                                                                                           |
| March 2020     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Completed Chapter 6</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                       |



## Appendix B

**2019 Lincoln, Nebraska Demographics**

The graph indicates the 2019 population of Lincoln, Nebraska based on the 2019 population of 284,736 individuals. This information was taken from the World Population Review.

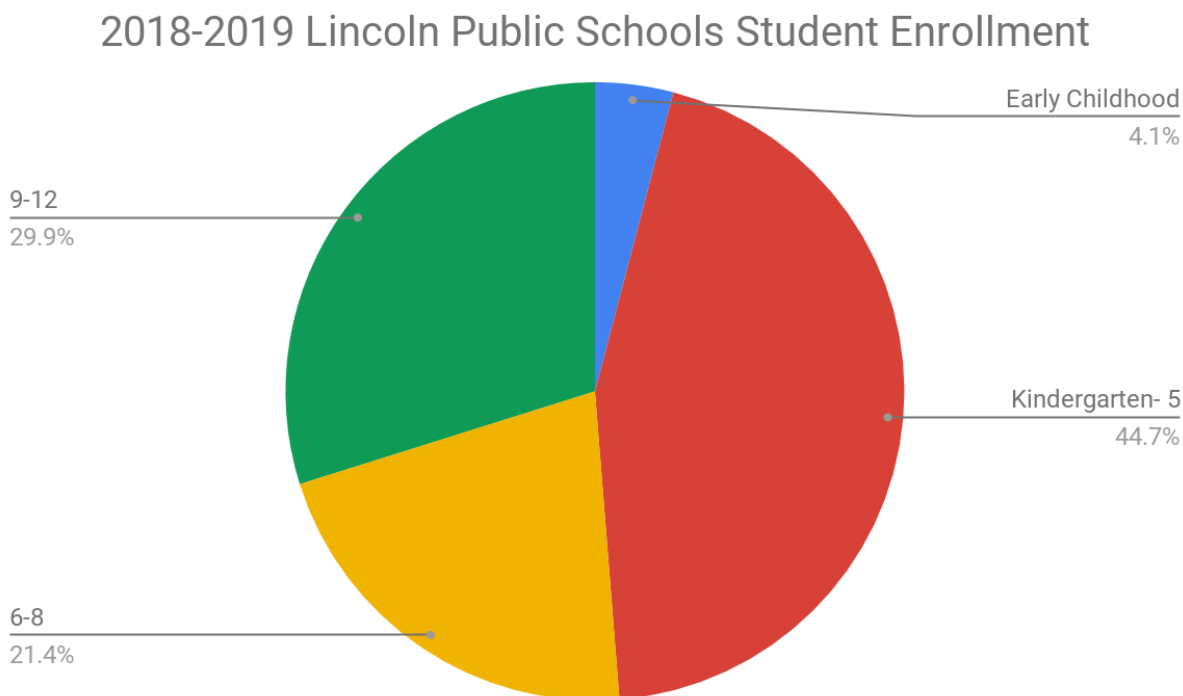


- In 2019 85.34 percent of Lincoln, Nebraska's population was White.
- In 2019, 4.4 percent of Lincoln, Nebraska's population was African American.
- In 2019, 4.64 percent of Lincoln, Nebraska's population was Asian.

## Appendix C

**2018-2019 Lincoln Public Schools Student Enrollment**

The graph indicates the 2018-2019 Lincoln Public School Student Enrollment. The information was taken from the Lincoln Public Schools website.



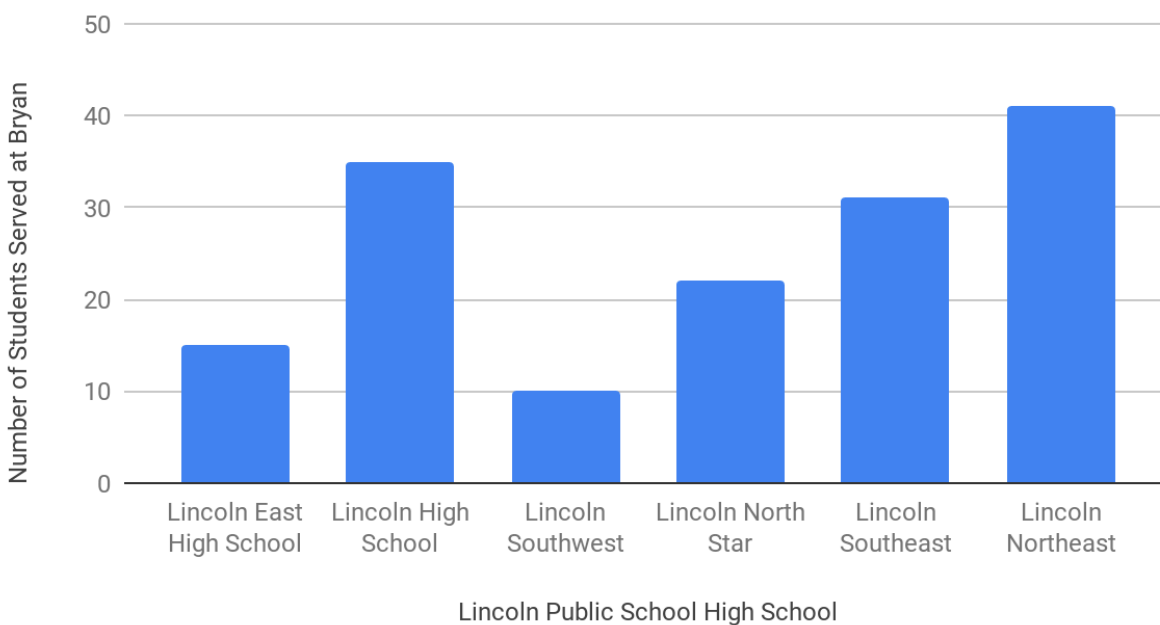
- In the 2018-2019 school year, the largest student enrollment was found in grades K-5 with 44.7 percent of the student population being in those grades.
- In the 2018-2019 school year, the smallest student enrollment was found in early childhood with 4.1 percent of the student population being in those grades.
- The total population enrollment during the 2018-2019 school year at Lincoln Public Schools was 42,011 students.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix D

**2018-2019 Students Served at Bryan by LPS home High School**

The graph shows the number of students that were served at the Bryan Community Focus Program during the 2018-2019 school year broken by the student's home high school. Bryan served a total of 164 students during the 2018-2019 school year. This information was taken from the 2018-2019 Bryan School Improvement Profile.

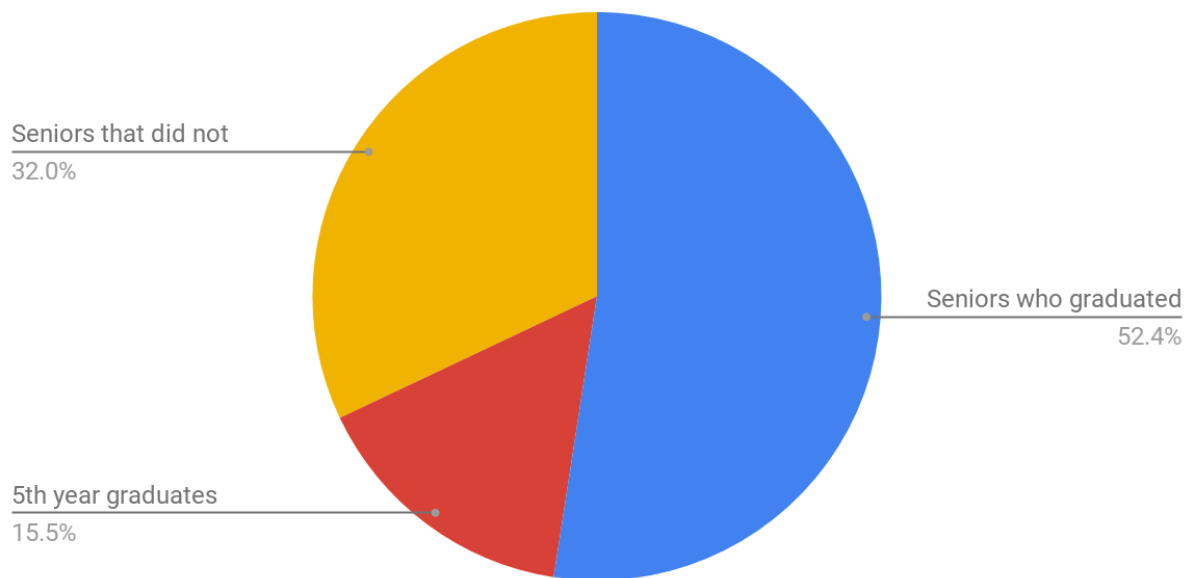
**2018-2019 Students Served at Bryan by LPS home High School**

- The total number of students served at The Bryan Community Focus Program during the 2018-2019 school year was 164.
- In 2018-2019, the largest home high school represented in the Bryan Community student population was Lincoln Northeast High School, with 41 students.
- In 2018-2019, the smallest high school represented in the Bryan Community student population was Lincoln Southwest High School, with 10 students.

## Appendix E

**2018-2019 Bryan Community Focus Program Active Senior Graduation**

The graph indicates the number of active enrolled seniors that did or not graduate during the 2018-2019 school year at the Bryan Community Focus Program. This information was taken from the 2018-2019 Bryan School Improvement Profile.

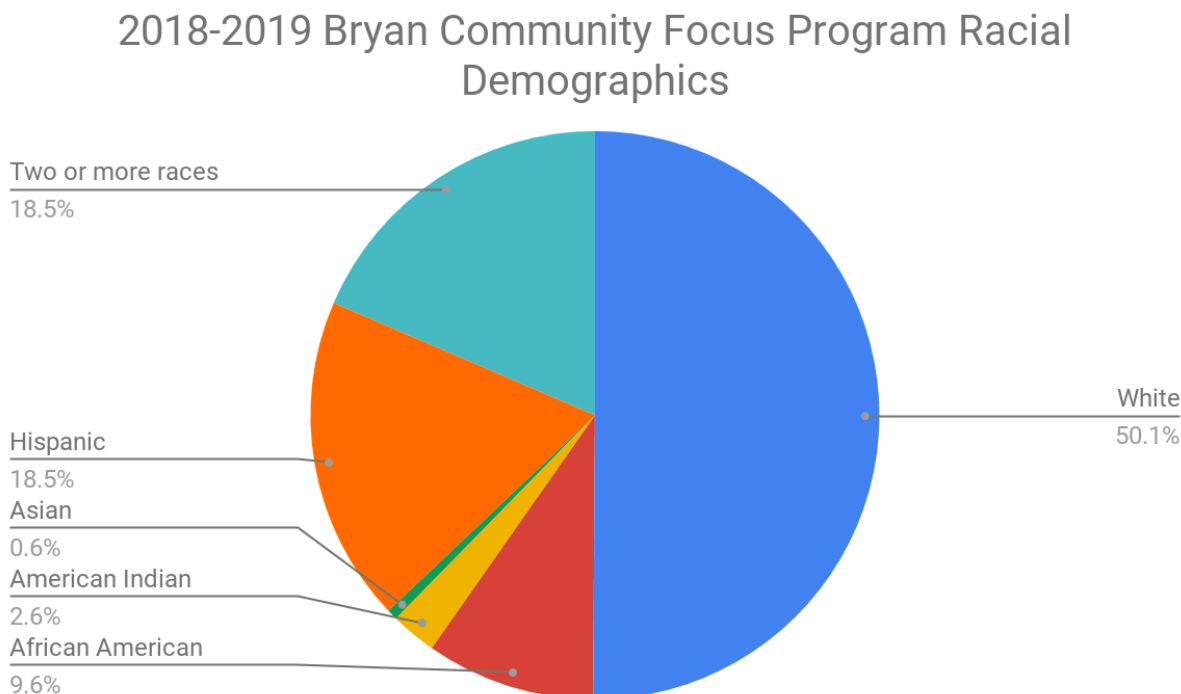
**2018-2019 Bryan Community Focus Program Active Senior Graduation**

- During the 2018-2019 school year, there were 103 active seniors enrolled at the Bryan Community Focus Program.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, 54 students of the active seniors graduated on track.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, 16 students of the active seniors graduated as a 5th year high school student and 33 active seniors did not graduate.

## Appendix F

**2018-2019 Bryan Community Focus Program Racial Demographics**

The graphic indicates the ethnic distribution for the Bryan Community Focus Program for the 2018-2019 school year. This information was taken from the 2018-2019 Bryan Community Profile.



- During the 2018-2019 school year, 50 percent of students at Bryan Community were white.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, 18.5 percent of students identified as two or more races.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, 31.3 percent of students identified as Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, or African American.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix G

**2018-2019 Bryan Assessment Inventory**

The chart represents the assessments that occurred during the 2018- 2019 academic school year at Bryan Community.

## ASSESSMENT INVENTORY

Subject: Bryan Community Focus Program

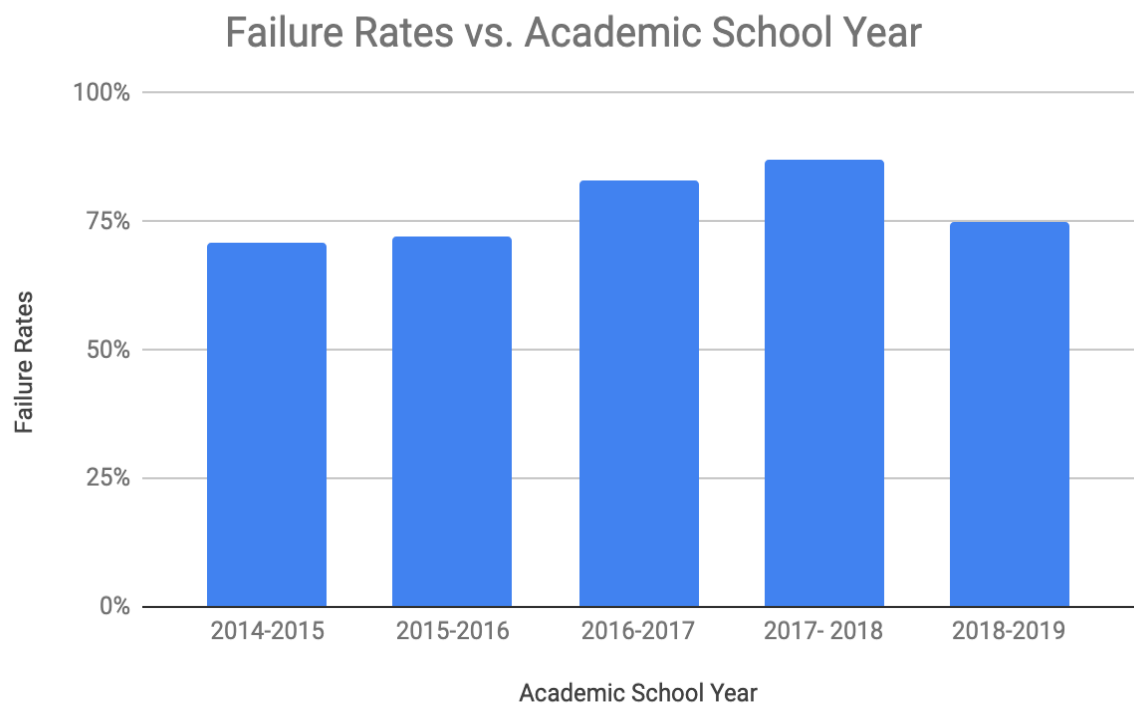
| ASSESSMENT NAME                    | TARGETED ASSESSMENT AREA | DATES OF COLLECTION AND LENGTH OF ASSESSMENT                                                                       | GRADE LEVELS | WHO HAS ACCESS TO RESULTS                          | USES      |             |                                 |           |  | COMMENTS |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------|--|----------|
|                                    |                          |                                                                                                                    |              |                                                    | Screening | Diagnostics | Instruction-Progress Monitoring | Summative |  |          |
| Attendance- Period Attendance List | Student achievement      | All year<br>Attendance team evaluates 1x week                                                                      | 9-12         | Administration                                     |           |             | x                               |           |  |          |
| Failure Rates                      | Student achievement      | All year                                                                                                           | 9-12         | Administration                                     |           |             |                                 | x         |  |          |
| Semester Grades                    | Student achievement      | Collected at the end of each semester<br>-January<br>-May                                                          | 9-12         | For all students:<br>administration                |           |             | x                               |           |  |          |
| Suspension and referral rates      | Student behavior         | *look in the school improvement profile                                                                            | 9-12         | administration                                     |           |             | x                               |           |  |          |
| Common District Assessments        | All subjects             | E10: Q2<br>E9: Q3                                                                                                  | 9, 10        | Administration and district curriculum specialists |           |             | x                               |           |  |          |
| Teacher Evaluation                 |                          | Probationary: 1/semester for the first 3 years<br>Tenured: 1x/every other year<br>All teachers: informal 1-2x/year | All teachers | Administration                                     |           |             | x                               |           |  |          |

- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, data was collected for each student who was failing at least one academic class.
- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, semester grades were given for each student.
- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, attendance was taken and recorded for every student.

## Appendix H

**Failure Rates: Students Failing At Least One Class**

The graphic indicates the percentage of students who are failing at least one class at Bryan Community during the years 2014-2019. This information was taken from the 2019 Bryan Community SIP Profile.

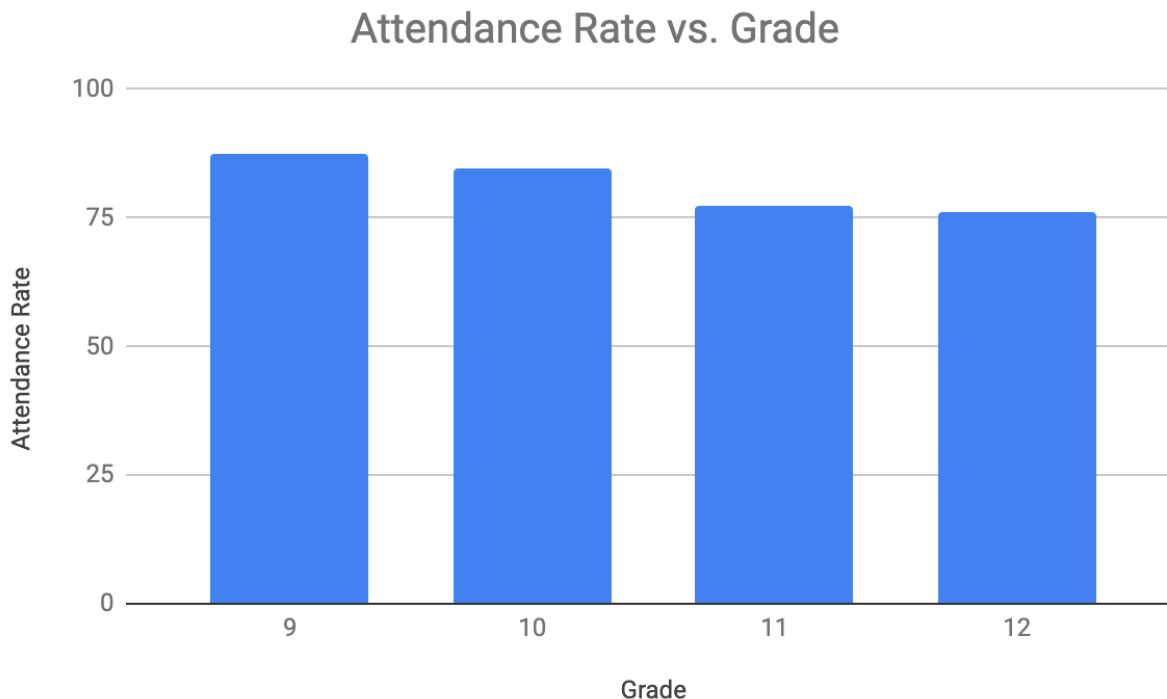


- During the 2014-2015 school year, 71% of all Bryan students were failing at least one academic class.
- During the 2017-2018 school year, 87% of all Bryan students were failing at least one academic class.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, 75% of all Bryan students were failing at least one academic class.

## Appendix I

**2018-2019 Average Daily Attendance by Academic Grade**

The graph indicates the average percentage of students present during the 2018-2019 academic school year, categorized by grade. This information was taken from the Average Daily Attendance Enrollment Summary Report.



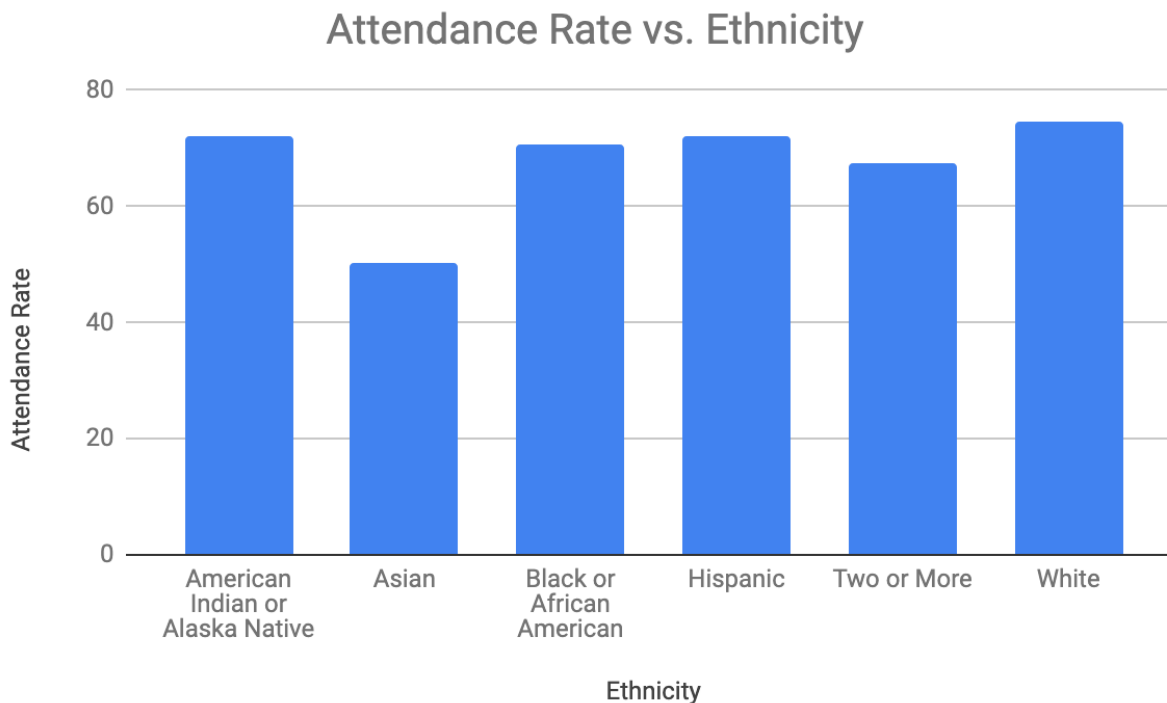
- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, 87.51% of 9th grade students were present every academic school day.
- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, 84.72% of 10th grade students were present every academic school day.
- The higher the academic grade, the lower the student attendance rate. During the 2018-2019 academic school year, 76.08% of all students were present every academic school day.



## Appendix J

**2018-2019 Average Daily Attendance by Student Demographics**

The graph indicates the average percentage of students present during the 2018-2019 academic school year, categorized by demographics. This information was taken from the Average Daily Attendance Enrollment Summary Report.



- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, 74.62% of white students were present during the academic school day.
- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, 67.41% of students with two or more ethnicities were present during the academic school day.
- During the 2018-2019 academic school year, 50.15% Asian students were present during the academic school year.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix K

**Spring 2020 Renee Check-In SpreadSheet**

The check-in spreadsheet was used by the Bryan Attendance Team during the *Check and Connect* intervention to record student attendance rates and which team member would complete the check in.

| Staff Name | Student Name | <a href="#">3 Day Form</a>                   | <a href="#">Check and Connect: Initial Conversation</a> | 2nd Check + Connect Date | 3rd Check + Connect Date |
|------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Gabby      | Student W    | completed 1/29                               | 5.93 (Gabby 1/31) 7 days on 2/7                         | GD completed 2/13        | 8 days- Feb 14           |
| Renee      | Student X    | 3 days- attempted 2.20. 3 day completed 2.28 | 4.56-2/21                                               |                          |                          |
| Cheryl     | Student Y    | 3.7 2/21- Cheryl                             |                                                         |                          |                          |
| Renee      | Student Z    | 4.29                                         | Completed 2.27                                          |                          |                          |
| Renee      | Student AA   | 3.03                                         | Completed 2.27                                          |                          |                          |

- The Renee Check-In Spreadsheet was updated and analyzed during the weekly Bryan Attendance team meetings.
- The spreadsheet was completed by the researcher.
- During the intervention dates, no student received more than three *Check and Connect* interventions.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix L

**Spring 2020 3-Day Attendance Form**

The three-day attendance form was used by the Bryan Attendance Team during the one-on-one check-in with New to Bryan students who missed three academic days.

**3 Day Attendance Check-In**

Please fill out this form during a one on one conference with a student after the student has missed five days of school.

\* Required

**1. Staff member completing this form: \***


---

**2. Student Name \***


---

**3. Date: \***


---

*Example: December 15, 2012*

**4. The barrier present in preventing regular attendance: \***

*Mark only one oval.*

☐

Illness related to the physical or behavioral health of the child. Items to consider: relationships with the school, medical concern(s) or diagnosis, social/emotional issues.

☐

Educational counseling (curricular/schedule changes). Items to consider: academic, classroom behaviors and/or the environment.

☐

Educational evaluation. Items to consider: an educational evaluation/intervention that has been, or is currently in place, examples include, SAP, IEP, 504, other academic/ behavioral interventions, barriers from items 1 and/or 2.

☐

Referral to community agencies for economic services. Items to consider: basic needs such as shelter, clothing, family factors such as parent/ student work schedule, providing care to family members, transportation, language communication with the school.

**5. Describe the barrier preventing the student from regular attendance. \***


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## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

6. How will this barrier be addressed? \*

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7. What is the resource? \*

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8. Who will arrange this? \*

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9. When will the resource be arranged? \*

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10. Is an evaluation needed?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes

☐ No

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## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

11. If yes, what type of evaluation is needed/ already taking place? When will the evaluation start and who is responsible for setting the evaluation up?

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loes.google.com/forms/d/1udXsle4B2NRLNi4H2G-J2imjXzVW2admrcuVwrT6G7L/edit

2/3

20

3 Day Attendance Check-In

12. Describe the students attendance goal.

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13. Describe a positive incentive that will motivate and inspire the student to increase their attendance.

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14. Any additional information regarding this students attendance.

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- The 3-Day Attendance Form was the first step of the *Check and Connect* Attendance strategy.
- All 14 questions on the form were completed by a Bryan Attendance team member.
- During the intervention this form was completed electronically.

## Appendix M

**Spring 2020 *Check and Connect* Attendance Form**

The three-day attendance form was used by the Bryan Attendance Team during the one-on-one check-in with New to Bryan students who missed three academic days.

2/27/2020

Check and Connect

**Check and Connect**

Please complete the 'check and connect' form during each weekly attendance check in, after students have reached 5 days of nonattendance.

**1. Date:**

Example: December 15, 2012

**2. Staff Member Name**

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Tanner Penrod
- ☐ Denise Craig
- ☐ Dwight Brown
- ☐ Cheryl Wilkins
- ☐ Cyndi Miller
- ☐ Renee Jones
- ☐ Gabby Danner

**3. Student Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Attendance Check-In Summary:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Explain the student's attendance goals:**

\_\_\_\_\_

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## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

/2020

Check and Connect

**6. Next steps to meet attendance goal:**

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Powered by  
 Google Forms

- The *Check and Connect* Attendance Form was used after five-days of nonattendance and during every additional weekly attendance check-in.
- All six questions were completed by a Bryan Attendance team member during the check-in.
- During the intervention, this form was completed electronically.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix N

## 2020 SIP Plan of Action Planner

The Plan of Action Planner details the *Check and Connect* plan that was intended to be implemented at the Bryan Community Focus Program in January and February of 2020.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Renee Jones</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>EDL SIP PLAN OF ACTION PLANNER</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>CADRE 38</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Date: November 7, 2019</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Current school/district goal project aligns to:</b> Bryan School Improvement goal to increase student achievement.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>SIP Problem Statement:</b><br>It was evident that students at Bryan Community Focus Program consistently struggled with attendance and earning all attempted credits. It was hypothesized that by providing students with the skills and support to increase attendance would positively impact the high class failure rates. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Project (Learning) Goal:</b><br>Development and implement a systematic attendance approach for new-to-Bryan students, in efforts of increasing academic achievement through increased attendance.                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Target Population:</b> All 9th and 10th grade students at Bryan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Data Points</b><br>1. Attendance rates by grade level during the 2018-2019 school year.<br><br>2. Attendance rates by race and ethnicity during the 2018-2019 school year.<br><br>3. Total number of students who have at least one failing grade.                                                                            | <b>Best Practice Strategies/Interventions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance Letter</li> <li>• Celebration of Attendance</li> <li>• Check and Connect</li> </ul> <b>EDL SIP Target Project (Intervention) Period:</b><br>January 2020- May 2020<br><br><b>EDL SIP Target Measurement Period:</b><br>January- February 2020 | <b>Research (Best Practice) selected solution (intervention) &amp; citation:</b><br><br>Check and Connect<br>Kearney, C.A. (2016) <i>Managing School Absenteeism at Multiple Tiers An Evidence-Based and Practical Guide for Professionals</i> . NY, NY: Oxford University Press. |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>"Local Measures" –</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Strategy/Sub-Strategy/Group</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description</b>                                                                                                                                       |
| Weekly Attendance meetings as an attendance team.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Data collection during each attendance meeting, determining which students need what type of attendance check in.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Check and measure student grades during each grading period.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Check and measure the total number of failing grades at each marking period.                                                                                                                                  |
| 3-Day Attendance Check-In                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Complete the 3 day attendance form will all new-to Bryan students that miss 3 academic days of school.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 3 day form mimics the Lincoln Public Schools Collaboration plan. This attendance meeting is to identify barriers that prevent the student from attending school.                                                                                                                  | The 3 Day form is a google form. Each 3 day check will include the use of the same form.                                                                                                                      |
| Weekly one-on-one attendance team check-in with students after they reach 5 days missed attendance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Weekly one-on-on check in, Check and Connect form.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Check and Connect form provides the attendance team member with a list of relational and attendance related questions to discuss with the student- to support the student building connections and discussing attendance barriers and goals.                                      | The Check and Connect is a google form. Each Check and Connect weekly intervention should include relationship building questions, details about weekly attendance and an attendance goal set by the student. |



## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

| Specific Activities to Implement the Selected Solution (Strategy/Interventions) & Measure                                                                                                                                                                                              | Person (s) Accountable          | Time-line Begin                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Time-line End | Resources                              | Professional Learning:                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attend weekly attendance meetings, where student attendance numbers are analyzed and recorded.                                                                                                                                                                                         | Attendance team members         | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020 | Renee's Check and Connect Google Sheet | Attendance team members will need to be shown where to find and how to fill out attendance check in forms.                                                                                  |
| Document the students who have missed 3, 5 or 10 school days.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Kim Peters                      | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020 | 3 day attendance google form..         |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Assign an attendance team member to complete the 3 Day Check In Form.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Selected attendance team member | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020 | 10 day collaborative form              | Attendance team members will need to be shown where to find the Check and Connect form.                                                                                                     |
| When a student has reached 5 days, assigned an attendance team member to meet with the student weekly for a 'check and connect' meeting. Together the student and team member will fill out the 'check and connect form'                                                               | Selected attendance team member | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020 | Check and Connect google form.         | Attendance team members will need to attend weekly attendance meetings and be able to access and interpret the Check and Connect form that distributes students to attendance team members. |
| Check and Connect will continue until the student has regained regular attendance status for four weeks. If a student's attendance continues to decline and the student reaches ten days absent, the students assigned administrator will complete a collaborative plan with students. | Selected attendance team member | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020 | Check and Connect google form.         |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Ethical Considerations:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                 | I will protect student identification by not directly stating the names of any students. I will instead discuss each student as student A, etc. Prior to the beginning of this intervention, all potentially affected students received a letter, in the mail, detailing the project, as well as instructions to have their student disclosed from the Check and Connect intervention. I will not deny any attendance qualifying student(s) the opportunity to participate in this school improvement project. My project data will be presented to the staff at Bryan Community Focus Program and with Cadre 38 members. I will follow all guidelines of the Doane EDL program and will share my findings with school teachers, school administrators and the members of Cadre 38 (Doane EDL program). |               |                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                             |

- The SIP Plan of Action Planner details the plans of the *Check and Connect* Attendance Strategy.
- The SIP Plan of Action Planner details the attendance strategy intervention plan, including each step and who is involved.
- The SIP Plan of Action Planner was presented to the Bryan Attendance Team.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix O

## 2020 SIP Plan of Action Report

The Plan of Action Report details the *Check and Connect* plan that was used to implement the attendance intervention at the Bryan Community Focus Program in January and February of 2020.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Renee Jones                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                   | EDL SIP PLAN OF ACTION REPORT                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | CADRE 38                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Date: 2/20/2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Current school/district goal project aligned to: Bryan School Improvement goal to increase student achievement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>SIP Problem Statement:</b> It was evident that students at Bryan Community Focus Program consistently struggled with attendance and earning all attempted credits. It was hypothesized that by providing students with the skills and support to increase attendance would positively impact the high class failure rates.                                  |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Project (Learning) Goal:</b><br>Development and implement a systematic attendance approach for new-to-Bryan students, in efforts of increasing academic achievement through increased attendance.                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Target Population:</b> 2020 Spring new-to-Bryan students.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Data Points</b><br><br>1. Attendance rates by grade level during the 2019-2020, second semester, school year.<br><br>2. Attendance rates by race and ethnicity during the 2019-2020, second semester, school year.<br><br>3. Total number of new-to- Bryan students who have at least one failing grade during the 2019-2020, second semester, school year. |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Best Practice Strategies/Interventions-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendance Letter</li><li>• Celebration of Attendance</li><li>• Check and Connect</li></ul><br><b>EDL SIP Target Project (Intervention) Period:</b><br><br>January 2020- May 2020<br><br><b>EDL SIP Target Measurement Period:</b><br><br>January- February 2020 |                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Research (Best Practice) selected strategy /intervention &amp; citation:</b><br><br>Check and Connect<br>Kearney, C.A. (2016) <i>Managing School Absenteeism at Multiple Tiers An Evidence-Based and Practical Guide for Professionals</i> . NY, NY: Oxford University Press. |
| <b>"Local Measures" –</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Strategy/Sub-Strategy/Group                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description                                                  | Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description                                                                                                                                                                             | Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description                                                                                                                                              | Classroom-based measurement of other data source and description                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Weekly Attendance meetings as an attendance team.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Data collection during each attendance meeting, determining which students need what type of attendance check in. | Check and measure student grades during each grading period.                                                                                                                                                                                 | Check and measure student grades during each grading period.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Check and measure the total number of failing grades at each marking period.                                                                                                                                  | Check and measure the total number of failing grades at each marking period.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 3-Day Attendance Check-In                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Complete the 3 day attendance form will all new-to Bryan students that miss 3 academic days of school.            | 3 day form mimics the Lincoln Public Schools Collaboration plan. This attendance meeting is to identify barriers that prevent the student from attending school.                                                                             | 3 day form mimics the Lincoln Public Schools Collaboration plan. This attendance meeting is to identify barriers that prevent the student from attending school.                                                                                                                                                                                        | The 3 Day form is a google form. Each 3 day check will include the use of the same form.                                                                                                                      | The 3 Day form is a google form. Each 3 day check will include the use of the same form.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Weekly one-on-one attendance team check-in with students after they reach 5 days missed attendance.<br>If ten days of missed school occurs, a collaborative plan will be held.                                                                                                                                                                                 | Weekly one-on-on check in, Check and Connect form.                                                                | Check and Connect form provides the attendance team member with a list of relational and attendance related questions to discuss with the student- to support the student building connections and discussing attendance barriers and goals. | Check and Connect form provides the attendance team member with a list of relational and attendance related questions to discuss with the student- to support the student building connections and discussing attendance barriers and goals.                                                                                                            | The Check and Connect is a google form. Each Check and Connect weekly intervention should include relationship building questions, details about weekly attendance and an attendance goal set by the student. | The Check and Connect is a google form. Each Check and Connect weekly intervention should include relationship building questions, details about weekly attendance and an attendance goal set by the student.                                                                    |

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

| Specific Activities Implemented for the Selected Solution (Strategy/Interventions) & Measure                                                                                                                                                                                           | Person (s) Accountable          | Time-line Began                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Time-line Ended | Resources                              | Professional Learning Conducted:                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attend weekly attendance meetings, where student attendance numbers are analyzed and recorded.                                                                                                                                                                                         | Attendance team members         | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020   | Renee's Check and Connect Google Sheet | Attendance team members will need to be shown where to find and how to fill out attendance check in forms.                                                                                  |
| Document the students who have missed 3, 5 or 10 school days.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Kim Peters                      | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020   | 3 day attendance google form..         |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Assign an attendance team member to complete the 3 Day Check In Form.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Selected attendance team member | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020   | 10 day collaborative form              | Attendance team members will need to be shown where to find the Check and Connect form.                                                                                                     |
| When a student has reached 5 days, assigned an attendance team member to meet with the student weekly for a 'check and connect' meeting. Together the student and team member will fill out the 'check and connect form'                                                               | Selected attendance team member | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020   | Check and Connect google form.         | Attendance team members will need to attend weekly attendance meetings and be able to access and interpret the Check and Connect form that distributes students to attendance team members. |
| Check and Connect will continue until the student has regained regular attendance status for four weeks. If a student's attendance continues to decline and the student reaches ten days absent, the students assigned administrator will complete a collaborative plan with students. | Selected attendance team member | January 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | February 2020   | Check and Connect google form.         |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Ethical Considerations:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                 | I will protect student identification by not directly stating the names of any students. I will instead discuss each student as student A, etc. Prior to the beginning of this intervention, all potentially affected students received a letter, in the mail, detailing the project, as well as instructions to have their student disclosed from the Check and Connect intervention. I will not deny any attendance qualifying student(s) the opportunity to participate in this school improvement project. My project data will be presented to the staff at Bryan Community Focus Program and with Cadre 38 members. I will follow all guidelines of the Doane EDL program and will share my findings with school teachers, school administrators and the members of Cadre 38 (Doane EDL program). |                 |                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                             |

- The SIP Plan of Action Report details the interventions that were implemented in the *Check and Connect* Attendance Strategy.
- The SIP Plan of Action Report details the attendance strategy intervention, including each step and who is involved.
- The SIP Plan of Action Report was presented to the Bryan Attendance Team.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, JONES

## Appendix P

## 2020 IRB Form

The Institution Review Board form provided all new-to Bryan students with an explanation of the *Check and Connect* attendance review, as well as provided the student and their family the option of not participating in the intervention.



**Bryan Community Focus Program**  
**300 S 48th Street**  
**Lincoln, Ne 68510**

January 06, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Renee Jones (English Teacher at Bryan) is a Doane University graduate student in educational leadership. Part of a requirement for graduation is to implement a school improvement project focused on increasing attendance. Your child will be part of the group who will benefit from this project.

The attendance strategies being implemented are aligned with LPS and Bryan Community Focus Programs school improvement goals, education policies, LPS curriculum, and has been approved by Dr. Leslie Eastman, Director of LPS Assessment and Evaluation Services. Your child's data will be included in the results. All reported data will have no identifying factors. Your child's results will be completely anonymous. Strict confidentiality with all data will be maintained.

You are welcome to review the project action plan. Please contact Renee Jones or Tanner Penrod, who will set up a time for your questions to be answered.

**If you DO NOT want your child's anonymous data to be included in the project results, please sign the form below and return it to school by January 24, 2020.** If your child does not participate, this will not affect his/her grade in the course in any way. If we do not receive this form, your child's data will be anonymously included in this project's results.

Sincerely,

Tanner Penrod and Renee Jones

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 ----

I DO NOT WANT my child to participate in the attendance program.

Child's name:

Parent/Guardian signature:

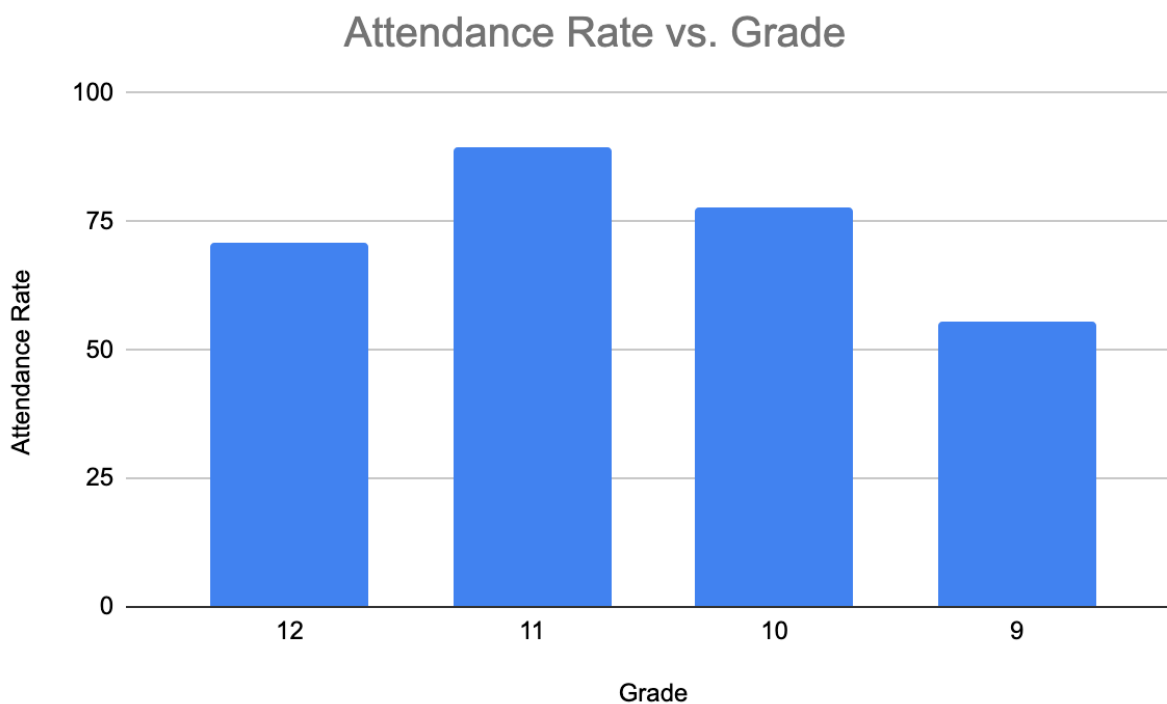
Date:

- The IRB form was sent out to all new-to Bryan students in January 2020.
- The IRB form provided families the ability to opt-out of the attendance intervention.
- The IRB form explained that all student information would be kept anonymous.

## Appendix Q

**Spring 2020 Check and Connect Average Daily Attendance Rates by Grade**

The graph indicates the average percentage of students present by grade level during the *Check and Connect* Attendance intervention. This information was calculated by the researcher.

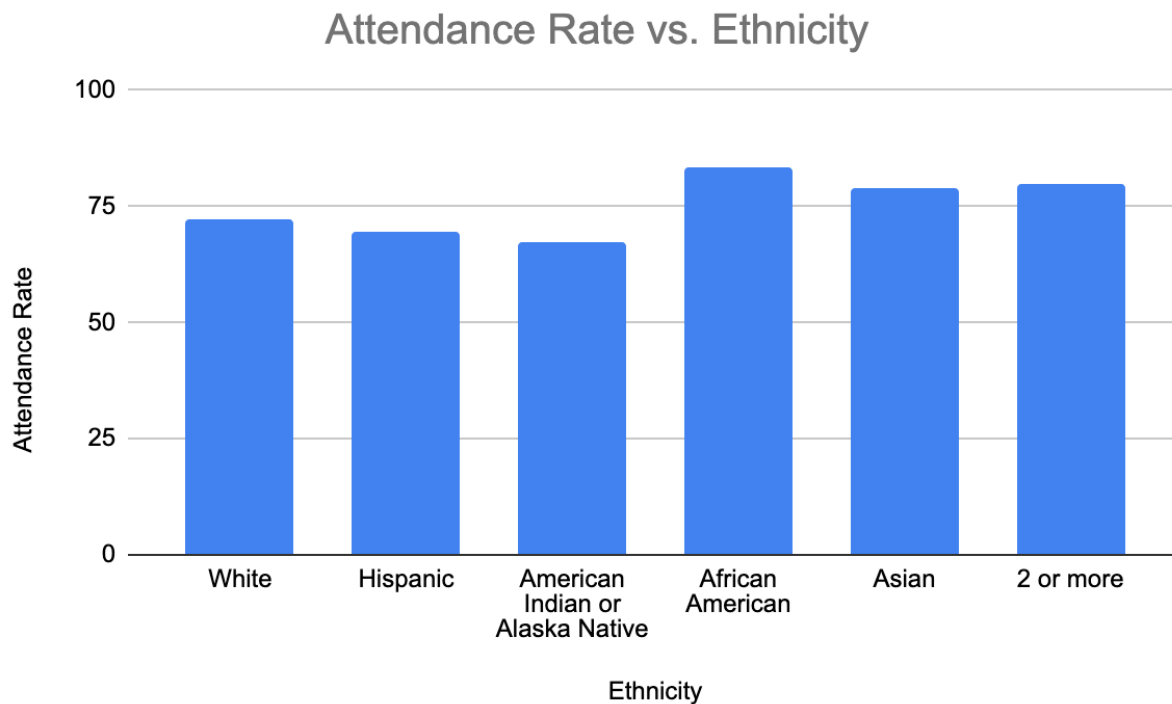


- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention 71.05% of twelfth graders were present each academic school day.
- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention 89.50% of all eleventh graders were present each academic school day.
- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention 77.77% of all tenth graders were present each academic school day.

## Appendix R

**Spring 2020 Check and Connect Average Daily Attendance Rates by Ethnicity**

The graph indicates the average percentage of students present by ethnicity during the *Check and Connect* Attendance intervention. This information was calculated by the researcher.

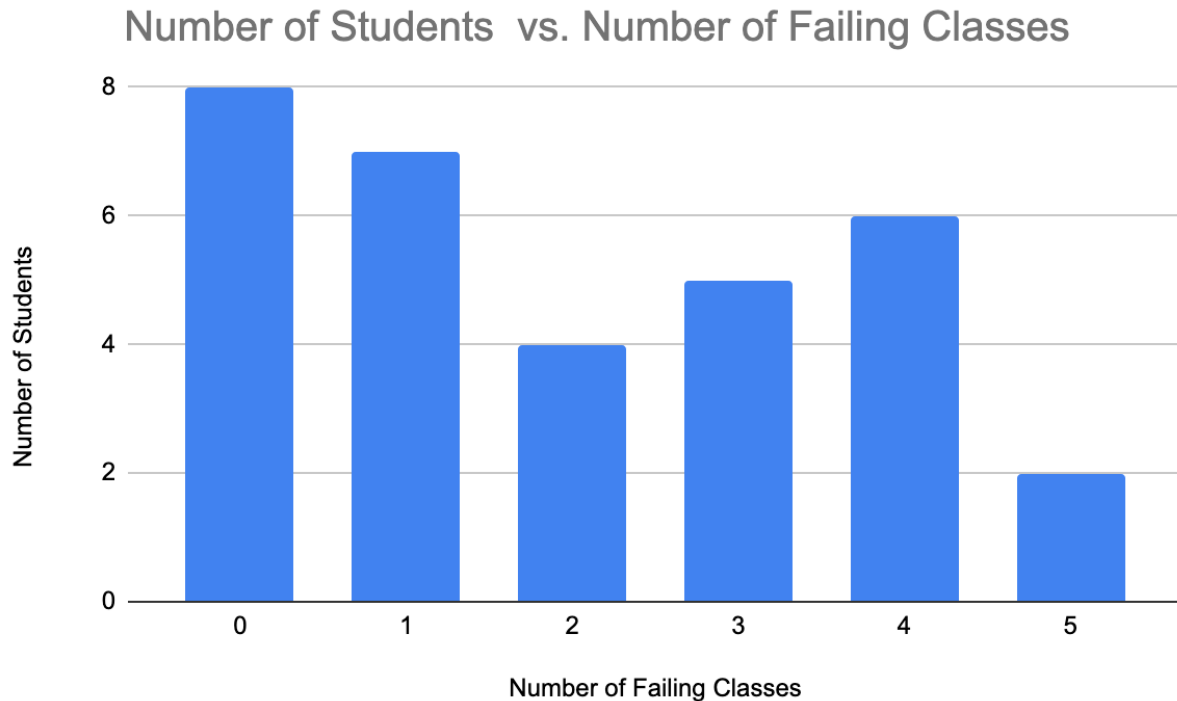


- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention 72.35% of all white students were present each academic school day.
- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention 83.50% of all African American students were present each academic school day.
- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention 67.33% of all American Indian or Alaska Native students were present each day.

## Appendix S

**Spring 2020 Check and Connect Class Failure Rate**

The graph indicates the number of failed academic classes during the *Check and Connect* Attendance intervention. This information was calculated by the researcher.



- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention, eight students were not failing any academic courses.
- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention, seven students were failing one academic course.
- During the *Check and Connect* attendance intervention, two students were failing five academic courses,