



Linn-Mar Community School District

2026-2027 At-Risk and Dropout Prevention Plan



Introduction to At-Risk Education

As defined by 281 Iowa Administrative Code 12.2(256), an "at-risk student" means any identified student who needs additional support and who is not meeting or not expected to meet the established goals of the educational program (academic, personal/social, career/vocational). At-risk students include but are not limited to students in the following groups: homeless children and youth, dropouts, returning dropouts, and potential dropouts.

The Linn Mar Community School District will plan the following provisions for meeting the needs of at-risk students (281 Iowa Administrative Code 12.5(13)):

1. Valid and systematic procedures and criteria to identify at-risk students throughout the school district's school-age population,
2. Determination of appropriate ongoing educational strategies for alternative options education programs as required in Iowa Code of section 280.19A, and
3. Review and evaluation of the effectiveness of provisions for at-risk students.

The Linn Mar Community School District will use additional allowable growth for provisions for at-risk students and will incorporate educational program goals.

Provisions for at-risk students will align with the student learning goals and content standards established by the school district.

The Linn-Mar School District will include objectives, activities, cooperative arrangements with other service agencies and service groups, and strategies for parental involvement to meet the needs of at-risk children.

The Linn Mar Community School District will identify students considered at-risk according to the state definition as established in Iowa Code 257.39.

Program Goals, Objectives, and Activities to Meet the Needs of Students Identified as At-Risk, Secondary Students Who Attend Alternative Programs and Alternative Schools, or Potential Dropouts or Returning Dropouts

Goal Area	Program Goals	Measurable Objectives Linn-Mar Will Achieve
Academic	2.0 Learning Excellence - We will empower student achievement through unique, differentiated learning opportunities.	Learning Excellence Results
Attendance	3.0 Learner Experience - We will foster a safe, healthy, and respectful learning environment.	Learner Experience Results
Graduation	To ensure all participants remain on track to graduate with their cohort.	Learning Excellence Results
Engagement	To enhance student connection to school and overall engagement in positive activities.	Learner Experience Results

Student Identification Criteria and Procedures and a Provision For Identifying At-Risk Students

Linn-Mar Community School District Local At-Risk Programming

The Linn-Mar Community School District will annually maintain, adjust, and audit the programming options and monitoring protocols for identified at-risk students and will closely adhere to the Department of Education Standard for At-Risk Education. The following nine components will serve as a framework for K-12 local programming options:

#1 STRATEGIES FOR IDENTIFICATION OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

The Linn-Mar Community School District will identify students considered at-risk according to the state definition as established in Iowa Code 257.39.

Students must meet a minimum of two of the following state criteria:

1. High rate of absenteeism, truancy, or frequent tardiness
2. Limited connectivity or lack of identification with school, including but not limited to, expressed feelings of not belonging
3. Lack of typical progress in school to include a number of “beginning” skills earlier in a school career (especially compared to classmates who are “developing” or beyond in what would generally be considered more typical student progress for a grade level) and poor grades later in the school career. As it relates to poor grades, including but not limited to, failing in one or more school subjects or grade levels
4. Low achievement scores in reading or mathematics which reflect achievement at least two years or more below grade level

The Linn-Mar Community School District recognizes that there are several factors beyond those defined by state code that would place a student in the position to be considered as an at-risk student at any given time in their educational career. The district has established level-specific criteria aligned with the National Dropout Prevention Center and implemented a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework. This framework leverages data-driven decision-making to drive continuous improvement and strengthen academic, social-emotional, and behavioral outcomes for all learners, ensuring they are prepared for success throughout their educational journey.

#2 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Supplemental and/or intensive support is given in addition to the core to students who meet the established criteria. Individual schools will have supports identified and in place to meet the students’ needs, with the range of services determined at the building level. At each level school personnel will document and monitor interventions for all students being served following the MTSS process or with proactive measures to address the at-risk criteria identified above.

#3 COORDINATION WITH COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT SERVICES

The Linn-Mar Community School District values and takes pride in its strong partnerships with community organizations. With parent consent and on an individualized case by case basis, we may collaborate with these partners to provide ongoing external services for students in grades K-12, as needed, to support their success.

#4 SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT SERVICES

Area educational agencies will provide school-based services as determined by specific individual and building needs.

#5 APPROPRIATE SCHOOL BASED COUNSELING SERVICES

Appropriate school-based counseling service includes the identification, monitoring, and provision of assistance to students regarding their academic, career, and personal social development. The standard for at-risk students implies that these school based counseling services should be made available to at-risk populations to no less an extent than provided to other students, and to the extent possible, be provided as needed at the local level.

#6 STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING PARENTS

The Linn-Mar Community School District values respectful, two way communication with parents as a cornerstone for engaging them as partners in their child's education. By involving our parents our goal is to enhance student success and influence future educational opportunities.

#7 INVOLVEMENT OF ALL SCHOOL PERSONNEL

At-risk personnel are expected to collaborate and utilize the district's professional learning community format to ensure that all identified students are receiving core and supplemental services to promote their academic success. Plans for providing and improving services for at-risk students should reflect efforts by all staff in a comprehensive effort as opposed to segregated and pull out instructional models involving a few staff. At-risk personnel will be active participants and leaders in the professional development at the building level.

#8 COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND STATE NON-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION

Federal and state nondiscrimination legislation supports placing attention on at least four strategic areas related to the education of at-risk students.

1. Identification and placement processes
2. Educational programming and support services
3. Data based decision-making
4. Employment and personnel practices

The At-Risk standard requires that a monitoring system be established to evaluate the progress of at-risk students and the effectiveness of the support services provided.

#9 PROVISIONS FOR MONITORING BEHAVIOR, SOCIAL, AND ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENTS

Some students, once identified as being at-risk, may not remain at-risk throughout their school career. However, some students may need constant support until they leave school. Therefore, a monitoring system is needed to allow for the constant review of student performance. This consistent review of formative data allows for the fluid entry and exit of students as needed.

Program For At-Risk Students

Credit Recovery

Credit Recovery is a secondary intervention option available for all 9th-12th grade students who have failed a core course. Students work with an at-risk teacher to ensure integrity of instruction and credit completion. Credits are traditionally earned through the online learning environment or independent study with a staff member and are accepted on a student's transcript on a pass/fail basis. The teachers work collaboratively to determine credits that need to be recovered. Credit recovery options are available during the course of the school year, as well as during the summer.

After-School Programming

We offer after-school programming for K-5 students at two elementary schools, specifically designed to support identified at-risk learners. Opportunities are coordinated by our school teams and communicated directly to families.

COMPASS

COMPASS is a voluntary high school program designed to provide an alternative education for students in grades 11-12 in the Linn-Mar School District. Students attending COMPASS earn credit toward a Linn-Mar High School diploma. COMPASS meets the unique needs of students by providing individualized graduation plans and relevant curricula. The goal is to provide academic and social/emotional support so that every student will achieve academic and personal success.

Qualifications Required of Personnel Delivering the Program

All personnel must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- **Student Assistance Specialists Team Member:** B.A. degree in education, psychology, sociology, social work or other related mental health field required. Counseling, prevention, or criminal justice certification from the Iowa Board Certification, social work license, and/or other applicable license/certification or eligible to obtain license/certification within one year of hire.
- **School Counselor:** M.A. degree required. Elementary or secondary teaching experience preferred. Cross cultural experience preferred. Licensure or Certification: Valid Iowa license with K-6 or 6-12 counseling endorsement required.
- **Academic School Assistance School Counselor:** M.A. degree required, cross cultural experience preferred, valid Iowa license with (7-12) counseling endorsement required.



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- **Elementary School Facilitators:** B.A. degree in education, psychology, sociology, or social work or other related field required.
- **Family Resource Specialist:** B.A. degree in education, psychology, sociology, or social work or other related field required. Experience working with at-risk students and families and working with students K-12th grade. Licensure or certification in teaching, counseling, prevention or criminal justice certification from the Iowa Board Certification, social worker license, and/or other license/certification or eligible to obtain license/certification within one year of hire.
- **Associate Principal:** M.A. degree in education required. Iowa secondary administrator's license and evaluator approval license. Successful SA/At-Risk teaching experience and administrative experience, cross-cultural experience working with adolescents, teaming and collaborative experiences with multiple administrators and continued professional growth.
- **Student Support Associate:** High school diploma or equivalent required, experience working with students preferred but not required, experience in school special education department or related experience preferred and working with students with behavior or learning challenges.
- **Teacher:** B.A. or B.S. degree required, cross-cultural experience preferred, holds and maintains a valid Iowa teaching license appropriate to the position.

Staff Utilization Plans

Staff Role	Primary Responsibilities
Student Assistance Specialists Team Member	Provide students with prevention, intervention, assistance, counseling, and referral services for the following at-risk criteria. Identification of at-risk students includes risk factors that the Student Assistance Specialists will consider when developing action plans for students.
School Counselor	Provides individual and group counseling, manages outside referrals, and assists with post-secondary planning for participants.
Academic School Assistance Counselor	Provide effective leadership in developing, achieving and maintaining the best possible educational programs and instructional services to help the high school students of the district better understand themselves, develop decision-making skills, learn interpersonal skills, and develop positive self-esteem.
Elementary School Facilitators	In addition to their other duties, they provide effective student management systems, including monitoring and improving student attendance and behavior outcomes.

Staff Role	Primary Responsibilities
Family Resource Specialist	To provide direct services to families in the Linn-Mar District regarding at-risk issues.
Associate Principal	Involved in all aspects of secondary administration including discipline, scheduling, evaluation, budget, and other duties. They are proactive in supervision of students, staff, and community so that focus is given to encouragement of self-directed learning and responsible citizenship. They will continually look for and improve the programs.
Student Support Associate	To assist classroom teachers in helping students to increase their academic and social skills as well as prepare them for inclusive activities into general education classrooms. Assist in maintaining a safe and orderly environment. Assist in problem-reducing behavior in/on school facilities to reduce disruptions and off-task behavior within the classroom. Under the guidance of the teacher, assist in facilitating all goals and objectives pertaining to academic programming and development by the teacher.
Teacher	Be dedicated to the development of lifelong learners by equipping students with the knowledge and skills to confidently meet life's challenges as responsible, productive citizens.

Staff In-Service Education Design

All staff involved in the program will participate in targeted professional development:

Training Topic	Frequency	Target Audience
Traumatic Event Response Training (ALICE)	Annually (Fall In-Service)	All staff mentioned in the table above
Critical Incident Stress Management	Annually	Student Assistance Specialists Team Members, Counselors, Associate Principals
Certifications towards their qualifications/ credentials	Due upon their licensure renewal	Certified staff in the table above



Training Topic	Frequency	Target Audience
Behavioral De-escalation and Crisis Management	Annually	All staff mentioned in the table above
Behavior Implementation Plans	2025-2026 School Year	All staff mentioned in the table above
Targeted Areas of Their Expertise (Vaping, Minority, Mental Health, Crisis Prevention Intervention, Functions of Behavior, Behavior Interventions, McKinney Vento)	Requirements by their job description	All staff mentioned in the table above
Data Tracking and Intervention Fidelity	Annually	Student Assistance Specialists, Team Members
Suicide Prevention	Yearly	All staff mentioned in the table above
Child Abuse	Every 3 Years	All staff mentioned in the table above
Other AEA Learning Online Trainings (Adverse Childhood Experiences: From Toxic Environmental Stresses to Success, Bloodborne Pathogens, Chapter 103: Seclusion & Restraint, Mandatory Reporter: Child Abuse, Seizure Training, Suicide Prevention)	HR requirement enrolled trainings	All staff mentioned in the table above

Evaluation Criteria, Procedures, and Performance Measures

The program will be evaluated annually based on the objectives outlined below:

Performance Measure	Evaluation Procedure	Data Source/Timeline
Dropout Rate Reduction	<p>Each year the building administrators, counselors, and the student assistance team members analyze the data and review if the students that received their services showed improvement.</p> <p>If there is a concern of a dropout situation there is immediate action personally, socially, emotionally, and academically. This also includes the family.</p>	PowerSchool (Annually & Situationally)
Academic Improvement	<p>Data-driven decision-making to drive continuous improvement and strengthen academic, social-emotional, and behavioral outcomes.</p> <p>If there is a concern of a dropout situation there is immediate action personally, socially, emotionally, and academically. This also includes the family.</p>	Convergence of Academic, Office Referral and PowerSchool Data (Tier 1, Tier 2, & Tier 3 meetings, Quarterly Grade Reports & Situational)
Attendance Improvement	<p>Track student attendance.</p> <p>If there is a concern of a dropout situation there is immediate action personally, socially, emotionally, and academically. This also includes the family.</p>	PowerSchool (Daily, Monthly, Quarterly & Situational)
Student Assistance Team Fidelity	Audit program delivery logs to ensure required daily check-ins and weekly intervention time requirements are met.	Check-In Logs (Daily or as Needed)



Program Budget

This budget outlines the necessary resources to effectively implement the Linn-Mar CSD At-Risk and Dropout Prevention Plan.

Please find the completed application for the At-Risk and Dropout Prevention Plan for the 2026-2027 school year. Board approval is required for this application as certified with the Department of Education by January 15, 2026. The budget proposal for FY2027 is \$1,487,505, which is the funding source for various learning support programs and services including:

- COMPASS
- After School Programming
 - Two Elementaries
 - Staffing for the Programming
 - Supplies
- Credit Recovery programs
- COMPASS Staff
 - Associate Principal
 - Building Secretary
 - Teachers
 - Student Supervisors
 - Student Support Associate
- School Counselors
- Academic School Assistance School Counselor
- Student Assistance Specialist Team Members
- School Facilitators
- Family Resource Specialist
- Professional Learning that is Evidenced Based for Professional Growth

Modified Supplemental Amount for DOP is a funding mechanism to assist districts in providing targeted services and programs for students at the local level. The budget is funded with property taxes levied for 2.5% of the budget (\$1,487,505) and a required match from district general funds (\$495,835) and is deemed categorical funding to be used specifically for the purpose of providing programming for students identified as returning and potential dropouts, as defined in Iowa Code Section 257.39