

Meridian Academy Alternative High School for At-Risk Students





Who are we?

- Kim Zeydel – 2015 Idaho Teacher of the Year
 - Marcus Snyder – 5th year MA Graduate – currently a CWI student
 - Aspen DeWitt – a junior who will be working on dual credit courses next year
 - Jerry Simms – 2nd year 9th grader who has maintained a 3.0 GPA at MA
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Our goal is to provide our students with the tools they need to succeed not only in high school but also in life.



Our Student Body

- Approximately 175 students
 - 75% are male and 25% are female
 - Most 9th graders come from Crossroads Middle School
 - New 10th-12th graders are at least one to two semesters behind in credits
 - Many have reading comprehension issues
 - Many are 3 to 5 years below grade level in mathematics
 - Majority are on the 5 year graduation plan
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Student Growth Plan

- Small classes with 13 teachers (2 are not full time)
 - 25% of our teachers are math teachers
 - 25% of our teachers are English teachers
 - Mentoring groups of 12-14 students per teacher
 - Senior Project based on college and career plans
 - Offer remedial to dual credit courses
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My Mentoring Group

- 12 students
- Two to three from each grade level
- 25% female and 75% male (including one transgender student)
- 1 dropped out due to senior project and did not have enough credits to graduate on time
- 1 was asked to leave due to behavior – Kuna S.D.
- 10 lived in abusive situations until parents divorced
- 1 chose to be a 5th year graduate to finish PTE courses
- 1 is a former drop out (graduate just before she turns 21)
- 1 is an honor student and 9 are behind in credits



Why do alternative schools have low on-time graduation rates?

- After 1 year, about 25% of our 9th graders are behind in credits
- 10th-12th graders start our school behind in credits
- Many have issues that prevent them from attending a regular high school
- Thus, no alternative school = drop out



Any questions for the students?





Increase Graduation Rate by Using the Blended Learning Flex Model

- Part online and part face-to-face with a teacher
 - Flex model where students have control over time, place, path, and pace
 - Mastery based
 - Students understand the course material
 - Reading comprehension and math skills are strengthened first
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How can the legislature help our school?

- Don't blame alternative schools
- Congratulate our 5 year graduates and note in the records that our students are attending an alternative high school
- Allow credits to be given for mastery instead of seat time (Carnegie Units)
- Require kindergarten
- Promote pre-school education in the home or outside the home
- Financial assistance for educational materials



Clubs

- **National Honor Society**
- Visits Meadow Lake Village – Memory Care Unit once a month since 2012
- Care packages for our military personnel

- **BPA (Business Professionals of America)**
- Came in 2nd at district and qualifies for state
- One former student went to nationals



Do you have any questions of these students?





STEM Education

- Wanted by the teachers but is hindered by
 - Scheduling issues
 - Lack of resources
 - Lack of teacher collaboration time
 - Emphasis on increasing low math and reading skills
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Math and Science Teacher Shortage Incentive Plan

- Loan or tuition forgiveness after 4 years in a classroom
- Hybrid positions – work in industry part-time and the classroom part-time
- Increase the prestige level and salary of teachers
- Offer different contract days: 180, 200, 220, or 240 days
- Extra days will be spent teaching summer school or developing curriculum
- One free graduate level course per year
- Reimbursement for passing Praxis tests