



UNION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Strategic Plan 2023-2028

“Building a more
perfect UNION”

PROMOTE GROWTH

FOSTER WELL-BEING

UCSD CORE VALUES

BUILDING A MORE PERFECT UNION

#UNCOmmon

PRACTICE
INTEGRITY

CULTIVATE
RELATIONSHIPS

DEMONSTRATE
SERVANT LEADERSHIP



The Union County School District has long served the residents of the communities of the northeast Mississippi county. Consolidating into four schools in the early 1960s, these four schools: East Union Attendance Center, Ingomar Attendance Center, Myrtle Attendance Center, and West Union Attendance Center exist over 60 years later as K-12 campuses serving the students of Union County. Throughout their history, these four attendance centers have stood as beacons for educational and extracurricular success as well as preparing many students for a bright future.

“Union County is a thriving community. The Union County School District strives to remain a vital part of the success of the county in which it resides.”

In 2023 all four schools remain as one school on a K-12 campus. An uncommon configuration, which contributes to easier student transition from grade to grade, identification and pride in their school from students and alumni, and an environment where students and staff can build the rapport to best educate and care for students. The four schools remain integral parts of their communities after all these years.

With currently 2906 students and 376 staff members throughout the district, student and staff safety is the highest priority for each school. Each school employs its own SRO and at least one full time nurse to serve its student population. UCSD has and continues to prioritize student and staff safety in facilities, scheduling, transportation, and extracurricular activities. The district will continue to address student physical and emotional safety in not only a physical environment but in the increasing challenges that have arrived with increased technology and the connected world in which they will live.

The district realizes the importance to access to a high quality education system for all its students. For this reason the district contributes the majority of its budget to direct instruction for students. In fact, the district currently ranks 59th out of 146 Mississippi school districts in being lowest in administrative cost. The district spends \$10,320 per pupil compared to \$12,107 state average. From this frugal approach, the district has seen outstanding results with all four attendance centers rated as A's in the 2022 Accountability ratings from the Mississippi Department of Education. Union County also boasts 27 National Board Certified teachers and a graduation rate over 90%. Preparing students for college or career is prevalent throughout planning for student success. The district's current goals of an increased workforce development initiative is coming to fruition with career awareness

curriculum, job shadowing, the IMPACTO internship program, and investment in increased CTE opportunities for all students. The needs of all students for college or career preparedness will continue to remain a top priority for all schools of the Union County School District.

The importance that extra-curricular activities play in engaging students and teaching important skills such as teamwork and commitment is evident in the Union County Schools. Many extracurricular activities from athletics to eSports to fine arts such as band and theatre allow students to become engaged in their school and community. Union County schools currently have students participating in 20 different athletics and activities.

Union County is a thriving community. The Union County School District strives to remain a vital part of the success of the county in which it resides. A safe, orderly environment with access to a multitude of educational opportunities for students from Pre-K to dual enrollment courses coupled with core values needed for success in the world will allow the students of Union County and the county itself to thrive.



NCOmmon FACILITIES

The Union County School District takes pride in each campus. Each campus provides a safe, nurturing learning environment for both students and staff. In order for our students to continue to excel, UCSD must address the facility needs of each campus.

While budgeting challenges always affect the ability to keep up with facility needs, UCSD will continue to efficiently use available resources to maintain facilities effectively. The district will continue to explore opportunities to provide the safest campuses for our students and staff, while seeking to modernize and increase efficiency when possible.

In order to maximize the use of our existing facilities, the district will continue a yearly assessment to assure that needed maintenance and improvements occur. By utilizing available federal, state, local, and private funds, significant improvements at each campus have already been made, and more are on the horizon. Given the age of the buildings, several were in need of asbestos abatement. Using ESSER funds, the district was able to remove all asbestos from our campuses, and all carpet was removed from classrooms and replaced with modern tile flooring. A much needed cafeteria expansion is currently underway at East Union, and multiple schools are receiving new windows. In order to promote more hygienic conditions, touchless bathroom fixtures and water fountains will also be installed at all campuses. All of these improvements met campus needs while also responding to the pandemic.

Through the strategic planning process, facilities and safety were strongly linked. Several improvements regarding campus safety have been made in recent years. All exterior doors have been equipped with keycard entry systems, and efforts have been and will continue to be made to establish a single entry to campus for all visitors. Campuses are equipped with more cameras and communication capabilities than ever before, and plans are in place to add additional fencing and automated gates.

The district has been fortunate over the years to receive private donations from supportive stakeholders in our communities. These private funds have been utilized to make improvements and establish new athletic facilities on our campuses to benefit our students.

In terms of future facility projects, the district has strategically assessed needs at all four schools. With rising student enrollments, additional classroom space has been deemed a priority on all campuses. Currently, plans are in place to add classrooms and restrooms with either new structures or renovations at each school. Additionally, the district plans to add a multipurpose building at Ingomar, new office space at Myrtle, and additional parking at West Union. Each school will also receive new outdoor sports lighting which will greatly enhance the safety of our facilities. All of the proposed projects will be accomplished as funding is available.





UNCOmmon SAFETY

The Union County School District prioritizes safety for its students and staff. The district maintains a culture of safety through training programs and communication strategies that involve students, staff, parents, and the community. The district also follows state and federal regulations, such as fire safety and emergency preparedness protocols, to ensure a safe learning environment. Additionally, the district provides access to mental health services and resources to promote the well-being of students and staff. In addition to the general safety measures, the Union County Schools District has identified five key areas of focus to enhance the safety and well-being of students and staff. These areas include physical safety, emotional safety, bus safety, internet safety, and athletic safety. The district implements specific protocols and guidelines in each of these areas to ensure that all students and staff are protected and supported.

Physical Safety

UCSD employs nurses at each school to provide for the general well being of students and staff. Data and tasks affecting student well being are analyzed each year so that staff and nurses can best address physical needs for all students. In addition, all UCSD schools participate in drills periodically to prepare for student and staff safety in every situation. The district has implemented emergency calls and procedures to address emergencies that might occur. Even before learning, UCSD aspires to ensure all students and staff leave safely to families at the end of each school day.

Emotional Safety

The UCSD realizes that a student's well being is not just physical in nature. In today's world of communication and easy access to outside dangers, emotional safety for students is an increasing area of emphasis. Support for students struggling with emotional issues is a high priority for students inside and outside school house doors. UCSD will seek to continuously improve staff support and services for students' emotional health needs.

Bus Safety

With the many students who travel to and from schools by bus, the UCSD strives to provide a safe bus fleet, monitoring, and transport for those students. A safe and reliable bus fleet to transport students is a necessity. The district maintains a plan to maintain the safest bus fleet possible and to train safe and reliable drivers for student transportation. Roads are reviewed periodically for safe populations on buses as well as the safety routes for pickups and transport for students. All UCSD bus drivers will be trained to safely operate buses and in CPR to safely handle any emergency that might arise on a bus. All regular UCSD route buses will be equipped with radio communication to use on routes and trips to provide communication for pertinent information and in case of an emergency.

Technology Safety

UCSD has a 1:1 initiative designed to provide each student with his/her own laptop or tablet enabling personalized access to digital resources and tools for learning, communication, and productivity. The district employs filters on devices that provide for safety for students' access to the internet. Red flag technology is used to identify and report key words that are necessary for appropriate device use and to identify possible vulnerable students using devices. The software can be highly effective in helping to educate students; however, dangers also exist for students using devices. The district mandates that any student using a device on campus use the district wifi to assure reliability in filtering of these devices. Technology is a fast growing domain, and therefore the district strives to continuously adapt to the challenges students face as they use devices, apps, and the internet.

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

UNCOmmon is making decisions using critical thought based upon your values and knowledge and not just following the crowd.

UNCOmmon is following the "golden rule" and treating others the way you want to be treated.

UNCOmmon is expanding curiosity and avoiding complacency by continually seeking to be intellectually challenged.

UNCOmmon is realizing you are always in control of your effort and attitude and are accountable for both.

UNCOmmon is intentionally protecting your core values.

UNCOmmon is "Looking in the mirror and not out the window" when facing problems and adversity.


UNCOmmon is striving to grow to be your best at what you value and love.

UNCOmmon is putting the needs of others above your own.

UNCOmmon is believing in the importance of being part of something bigger than yourself.

UNCOmmon is accepting that while many things worth our efforts might be difficult, persevering through such challenges will lead to success.

BUILDING A MORE PERFECT UNION



To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students and staff must value themselves, others, and their education.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students and staff must have an exceptional attitude and put forth a distinguished effort.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students must gain the knowledge, skills, and work ethic they need to be successful in college and the workforce.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students must graduate and be prepared to pursue a career they are passionate about that will allow them to support themselves and family.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students must have dreams and our staff should be living theirs.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students and staff must have a servant's heart.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our staff must believe that EVERY student can succeed and deserves the best we have to give.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students and staff must have empathy for each other.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students and staff must be willing to hold themselves and others accountable.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students and staff must intentionally treat others in an UnCommon manner.

To **"Build a more perfect UNION,"** our students and staff must develop their own core values, respect others, and stand up for the core values they believe in.



UNCommon INSTRUCTION

...to empower and equip strong learners and leaders

UCSD recognizes the foundation of education is the instruction that is provided to our students. The district strives to provide the best possible education for all students. By empowering and equipping strong learners and leaders, the UCSD commits to making sure instruction is UNCommon.

Creating a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

UCSD commits to implementing a guaranteed and viable curriculum aligned to state standards and assessed at the high level of rigor of state and national assessments. This guaranteed curriculum will ensure that all students in the UCSD have an opportunity to learn from effective teachers. In order to achieve a guaranteed curriculum, the UCSD will ensure all reading instruction is based on a structured literacy approach and is steeped in the science of reading research. The viable curriculum commits to adequate time to learn the content and that the scope and sequence of instruction flows among grade levels and content areas. To achieve the viable curriculum, the UCSD commits to creating a district level instructional team that will meet at least quarterly to review data, analyze school plans, and make recommendations to meet instructional needs. UCSD is committed to providing professional learning opportunities in the research of the science of reading to all instructional staff. Also as part of the overall goal of creating a guaranteed and viable curriculum, the district commits to investing in vetted high quality Tier I instructional materials for all subject areas. Interventionists and special education teachers will be provided with research based intervention curriculum and materials.

Preparing Students to be College and Career Ready

In the ever advancing global society, the UCSD recognizes the importance of students leaving high school to be college and career ready. The district is seeking more opportunities for students to participate in career and technical classes by offering flexible scheduling and hybrid classes in partnership with the Center of Innovation. With increased educational opportunities, UCSD seeks to increase the number of students leaving high school with industry certification. The district is providing additional opportunities for students to take the ACT and WorkKeys assessments.

The UCSD seeks to provide opportunities for career exploration for students. The district partners with Union County/ New Albany Excel by 5 to expose kindergarten students to a variety of careers and the Career Expo each fall. Tenth graders participate in the Imagine the Possibilities sponsored by the CREATE foundation each year to expand students' knowledge on a variety of careers. Career coaches partner with a variety of institutions to allow juniors job shadowing opportunities. The UCSD seeks to increase participation in the IMPACTO program, which is a paid internship program that provides hands-on learning experiences in a student's potential profession.

Increasing the Accessibility of High Quality Early Education Opportunities

UCSD recognizes the importance of early access to high quality pre-kindergarten as a great factor for future educational success. The district will partner with MAP Head Start to provide an additional classroom that will increase participation in a targeted population with at-risk factors. UCSD will also continue to seek grant opportunities to add tuition assisted classrooms based on identified needs such as low socioeconomic status, suspicion of a disability, and language barriers. UCSD is committed to publishing and recruiting participants that meet qualifications to encourage participation in early learning opportunities and increasing potential for a positive life-long educational experience.





UNCOmmon STAFF

The Union County School District has outlined a portrait of the ideal UNCOmmon staff member, aimed at consistently aligning with established core values. While achieving perfection in embodying this portrait is unattainable, the district is committed to seeking and growing staff that aspire to this ambition. The UNCOmmon staff member is passionate about teaching/learning and compassionate toward students, while also possessing a strong work ethic and being remarkably professional.

Passionate About Teaching/Learning & Compassionate Toward Students

The UCSD desires staff that are passionate in their professional purpose of teaching students so they can achieve a level of learning that will propel them into being successful adults in whatever endeavor they choose. This passion should be visibly evident not only in demeanor but also in the way staff prepares each day to implement the proven practices garnered to help students thrive. Determined selflessly, the staff's reward hinges completely on the achievement of students.

The UCSD desires staff that are compassionate toward students. Children are the district's most valuable priority. While the district stands resolved in aiding their academic progress, more importantly the district seeks to nurture their entire well-being. Students come each day from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, creating the need for empathy from their educators. The UCSD seeks staff that will provide this empathy while maintaining incredibly high expectations for students as academic standards and established core values are pursued to the fullest capacity.

Possesses a Strong Work Ethic

The UCSD desires staff that possess a strong work ethic. While there is an art to teaching and gifted teachers are wanted, the district believes the truth that hard work pays off. Staff cannot expect to develop a strong work ethic in students if the students do not consistently see that quality in the staff. Unwilling to compromise character, UCSD covets hard workers with integrity. The district values staff who are accountable, owning responsibility to give best effort to their students and to the professionals that work along with them. UCSD seeks committed workers, even in the face of increasing challenges the profession must endure. The district values hard workers that are reliable, consistently present, and performing at maximum effort.

Remarkably Professional

The UCSD desires staff that are remarkably professional. UCSD craves individuals who are self-reflective, those that will daily look in the mirror to further develop strengths and improve upon weaknesses. UCSD covets professionals who are coachable, willing to not only hear supportive appraisal, but to also work toward the improvement sought. UCSD desires professionals who are flexible, accepting of the fact that they work within an organization that will demand that plans be fluid and adaptable. UCSD longs for professionals that are genuine and positive, understanding challenges are sure to come, but they are in control of their effort and attitude to overcome them.

UCSD Must Provide the Paint

As an ambitious portrait has been outlined, the UCSD must be committed to providing the paint to make it happen. The district must establish hiring practices that pursue the finest of candidates that share these goals. UCSD must provide the targeted and relevant support the current staff needs to accomplish the professional growth set before them. The district must provide meaningful mentoring to those that need it most, especially those new to the profession. UCSD must build an UNCOmmon culture that will not compromise established standards, allowing those in pursuit of these standards to join together as a family to create a positive, lasting impact for students.



NCOmmon

COMMUNICATION

The UCSD believes that communication is key for student and staff safety, education, and morale. The district realizes that because communication is so critical to student and staff success and safety that it must take advantage of multiple means and opportunities to communicate with staff, students, and parents or guardians. UCSD realizes the need to not only communicate with parents regarding student educational progress, but also the need to communicate schedules and events in an increasingly busy world. For this reason the district will continuously monitor communication success and challenges. Needs Assessments to help the district assess the most effective areas of communication will be issued yearly and analyzed to fuel the most efficient means of communication for students, staff, guardians, and the community. The Union County School District utilizes a variety of forms of communication to connect and engage with students, parents, teachers, staff and the community. Email is the primary form of internal communication used by administrators, teachers and staff.

Daily and weekly announcements are shared via email to promote collaboration and awareness. Each school uses an intercom system to communicate inside the physical school building. The district's goal is to improve this communication tool in the near future. Administrators at the district and school level have handheld radios that are also on each school bus. These particular radios work statewide and enable our bus drivers to communicate while on route. Teachers communicate with parents through our school phone system. The school phone system has proven to be effective and successful when implemented. The phone system can be used at different levels by the school and district when we have important information, updates, schedule changes, weather announcements, etc. It has the capability to communicate via a call or a text message with the information depending on how the parent chose to be contacted at registration. Social media plays an increasingly important role in the district's communication providing real-time updates and news for parents, students and the community. Social media is also used to promote our students and schools. The use of a district website provides a centralized location for access to schedules, calendars, and other resources. Union County School District recognizes the importance of communication and the different forms needed to be a top priority.



Scan for website





NCO Common ACTIVITES

East Union State Championships:

Boys Basketball: 1981
Baseball: 2016, 2017, 2022
SlowPitch Softball: 2018
Boys Cross Country: 2009, 2011, 2015, 2022
Girls Cross Country: 2010, 2011, 2015, 2017, 2022
Boys Powerlifting: 2013, 2014, 2015
Girls Powerlifting: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023
Boys Bowling: 2006, 2007, 2010, 2018, 2021

Ingomar State Championships:

Boys Basketball: 1978, 1979, 1999, 2002, 2010, 2020
Girls Basketball: 1958, 1962, 1970, 1972, 1991, 1992, 1994, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021, 2023
Ingomar Cheer: 2010
SlowPitch Softball: 1996, 2002, 2004, 2006
Ingomar Volleyball: 2022

Myrtle State Championships:

Girls Basketball: 2003
Boys Basketball: 1997
Girls Track: 2001, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012
Boys Track: 2016
Girls Cross Country: 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2017
Boys Cross Country: 2004, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2015
SlowPitch Softball: 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2005
FastPitch Softball: 2021
Archery: 2014
Pom Dance: 2012

West Union State Championships:

Girls Cross Country: 2010
Boys Cross Country: 2008, 2022
Girls Basketball: 1997, 1998
Boys Basketball: 1967, 1970, 1975
SlowPitch Softball: 2009
Girls Bowling: 2008
Boys Bowling: 2011
Boys Golf: 2001, 2003, 2004

Extracurricular Activities:

Football	Archery	Track and Field
Basketball	Powerlifting	Cross Country
FastPitch Softball	Cheer	Bowling
Baseball	Dance	Bass Fishing
Volleyball	Golf	eSports
	Swim	Band
	Pom	Theatre





UNION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Central Office

250 Carter Avenue
New Albany, MS 38652
662-534-1960 | www.union.k12.ms.us

East Union Attendance Center

1548 Highway 9 South
Blue Springs, MS 38828
662-534-6920

Ingomar Attendance Center

1384 CR 101
New Albany, MS 38652
662-534-5463

Myrtle Attendance Center

1008 Paul Nolan Way
Myrtle, MS 38650
662-988-2416

West Union Attendance Center

1610 Highway 30 West
Myrtle, MS 38650
662-534-6745

2022 Accountability Rating:

UCSD, East Union, Ingomar, Myrtle, West Union
All A rated

Total Student Enrollment: 2906
Employees: 376



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