

Mar 5th, 3:00 PM - 4:15 PM

# Reviving Realistic Dreams ....What a High School Diploma Does for Youth At Risk

Patti Huffman

*Wilson County Adult High School, [huffmanp@wilsonk12tn.us](mailto:huffmanp@wilsonk12tn.us)*

Mary Ashby

*Wilson County Adult High School, [ashbym@wcschools.com](mailto:ashbym@wcschools.com)*

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## Recommended Citation

Huffman, Patti and Ashby, Mary, "Reviving Realistic Dreams ....What a High School Diploma Does for Youth At Risk" (2018).  
*National Youth-At-Risk Conference Savannah*. 25.

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# *Realizing Realistic Dreams*




....What a High School Diploma  
Means to Youth-At-Risk!

# Objectives for this Session

- ▶ Share the process by which students earn a high school diploma from this non-traditional high school.
- ▶ Share how students' dreams are revived as they discover how to pursue their next step in achieving their dreams.
- ▶ Share success stories of graduates from the Wilson County Adult High School in Lebanon, TN.

## Goal for this Session

- ▶ Participants will learn about the tools and strategies implemented at the Wilson County Adult High School that can be employed within their own disciplines.
- 

# Demographics of Wilson County

86.76% of people are White,  
6.61% are African American,  
1.35% are Asian,  
0.29% are Native American,  
0.12% claim 'Other'

EDUCATION	Wilson, Tennessee	United States
Some High School Educ. ?	7.20%	7.84%
High School Educ. ?	88.74%	86.33%
Some College Educ. ?	20.83%	21.16%
2 yr College Grad. ?	8.07%	7.93%
4 yr College Grad. ?	26.72%	29.28%
Masters Grad. ?	6.04%	7.77%
Professional Degree ?	1.19%	1.96%
Doctorate Degree ?	0.92%	1.29%

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Fastest Growing County in TN

# Demographics of Wilson County Schools

## Some Countries Represented:



Egypt



El Salvador



India



Mexico



United States of America



Uzbekistan



## First Languages

Amharic

Arabic

Chinese/Mandarin

English

Russian

Gujaranti/Hindi

Spanish

Poverty Rate

30.66%

Homelessness

2.3 %



# Wilson County Schools– Tennessee

Comprised of:

4 traditional High Schools

	2017–18 Enrollment
•Lebanon High School	1830
•Mt. Juliet High School	2116
•Watertown High School	517
•Wilson Central High School	1574

Adult High School– AHS – Wilson County Adult High School  
Alternative School– MAP – Modified Academic Program  
Online High School– TVOLS – TN Virtual Online School  
HiSET Program– Adult Learning Center

Wilson County Schools' Motto:  
*Excellence in All We Do*

# *The History of AHS*

- ❖ AHS launched in 1992 with two objectives:
  1. Allow adults who exited HS without diploma to complete necessary graduation requirements
  2. Help improve the county's graduation rate of 70%

**The first AHS graduate was 67 years old!**

- ❖ Since 2010 the population of the Adult High School changed due to the State of Tennessee's focus on improving graduation rates.

# *The History of AHS*

Number of  
Graduates:

- ❑ 1993–2011 540
- ❑ 2012–2017 725



*Over 1200 diplomas earned.....*

# ***PRICELESS***



# *The History of AHS*

- ❖ 2017 County Graduation Rate: 96.2%
- ❖ 2017 State of TN Grad Rate: 89.1%

In 2017, 9.6% of the Wilson County graduates  
..... graduated from AHS!

# *Who We Are*

## ❖ Staff

Mary Ashby      Principal

Vikki Adkins      Secretary

Kristi Galligan      Teacher

Blake Hall      Teacher

Patti Huffman      School Counselor

Brad Major      Part Time Teacher

Joy Shaw      Teacher



# *AHS Fabulous Facts*

- ❖ Academic Integrity
- ❖ High School Diploma
- ❖ Age requirement
- ❖ Credit Requirements
- ❖ Highly qualified teachers
- ❖ Extended school hours  
Monday – Thursday
- ❖ Mandatory Attendance

- ❖ No red “Easy” button



- ❖ No Crystal Ball



# *AHS Enrollment Process*

Referrals are submitted to AHS by:

- ▶ Graduation Coaches
- ▶ Principals
- ▶ School Counselors
- ▶ Attendance Director
- ▶ 18 year olds can contact AHS directly

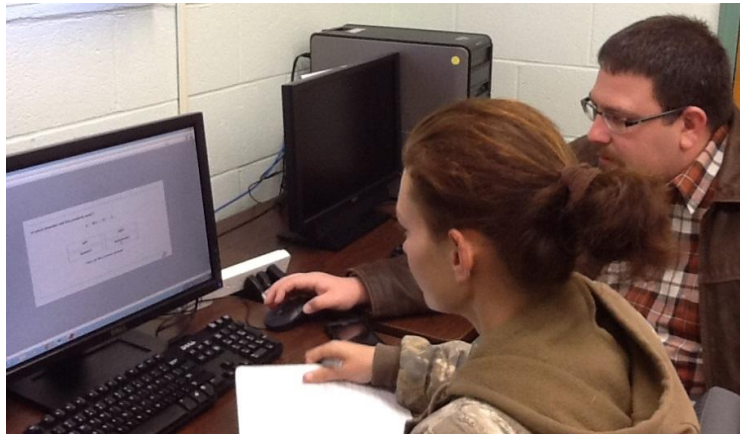
AHS secretary schedules an orientation date for each prospective student

Individualized plan developed from current transcript by AHS Counselor and Principal



# *A Day in the Life...*

Secured Entrance – Buzz for entrance  
Monitored hours – Students sign in/out  
Focused classrooms – Self-paced



Students work independently

Teachers provide individual  
instruction and monitor student  
progress





**The Adult High School  
shares the belief:**

**“Every Student  
Every Day”**

**Mona Dixon**

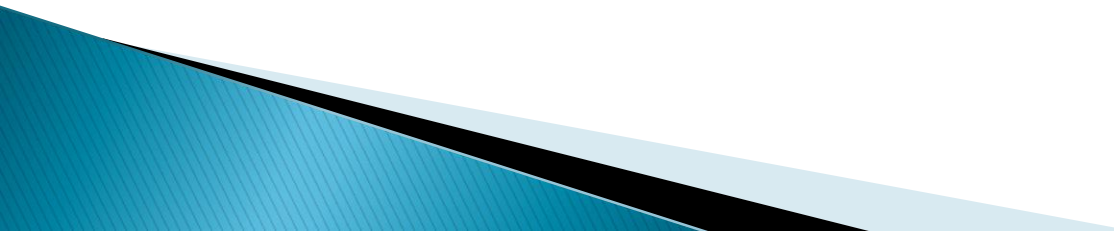




# Risk Factors


Poor school performance  
Poor parenting skills  
Child abuse, neglect, foster care  
Stress, lack of social support  
Violence, community violence  
Family dysfunction, rolelessness  
Death, depression, isolation  
Lack of support structure  
Alcohol, drug use, negative peer influence  
Mental illness, sibling, grades  
Single parent, caregiver  
Mental illness

# A Culture of Caring

- Remember, they meet your attitude before they meet you!
  - "I may be kind, but I am not weak!"
  - They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care!
  - Peoplework is more important than paperwork!
  - See a need, fill a need!
- 

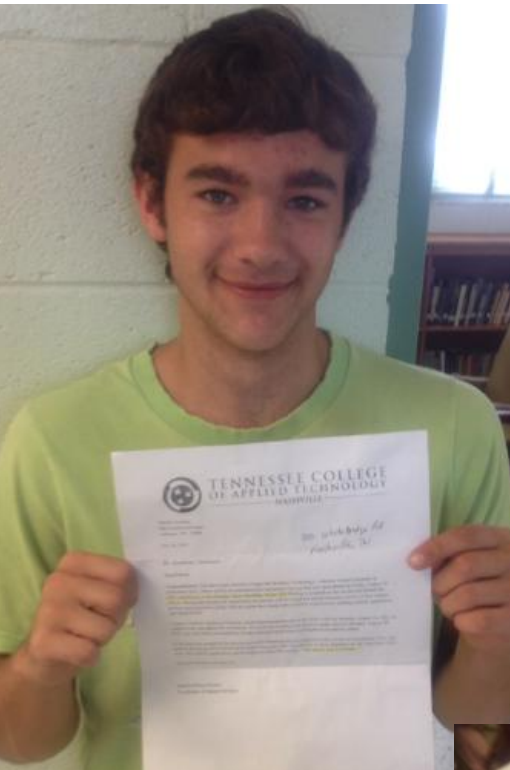


# Realizing/Reviving Realistic Dreams

- Match their aptitudes and interests with options for their future. They know their obstacles, but often they do not know their opportunities!
  - Provide solutions while modeling problem solving.
  - Foster independence, yet be a resource to help them forge their path.
  - Assist them in developing plans, offering “hope and a future.”
  - Revive or reveal their dreams , and shine the light on the path leading to them!
- 



# Realistic Dreams Realized!



# REALISTIC DREAMS REALIZED!



# A Culture of Caring

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- See a need, fill a need!

## Celebrate Success!





# Moving the marble



# AHS 2018 Graduation



*Adult High School Graduation  
Friday the eighth of June  
Two Thousand Eighteen at Six O'clock  
Wilson County Fair Expo Center  
Lebanon, Tennessee*







One day, an old man was walking along a beach that was littered with thousands of starfish that had been washed ashore by the high tide. As he walked he came upon a young boy who was eagerly throwing the starfish back into the ocean, one by one.

Puzzled, the man looked at the boy and asked what he was doing. Without looking up from his task, the boy simply replied, "I'm saving these starfish, Sir".

The old man chuckled aloud, "Son, there are thousands of starfish and only one of you. What difference can you make?"

The boy picked up a starfish, gently tossed it into the water and turning to the man, said, "I made a difference to that one!"





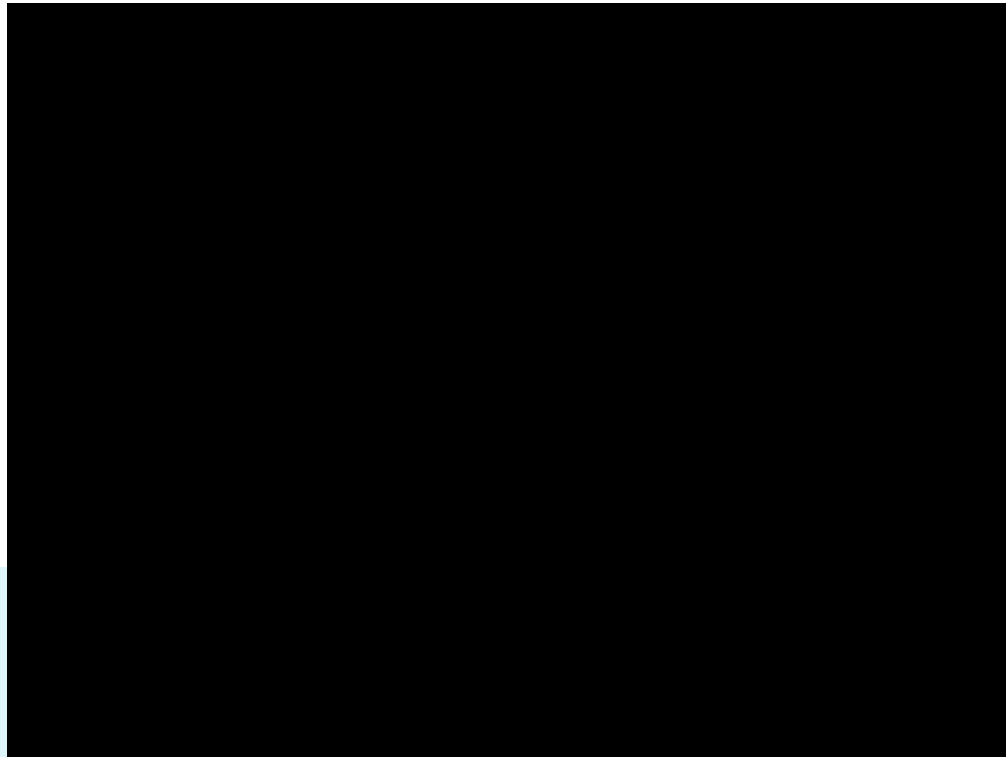
# Wilson County Adult High School

Lebanon, TN 37087

615-443-7199



Facebook – Wilson County Adult High School



Mary Ashby  
Principal  
615-443-7199  
ashbym@wcschools.com

Patti Huffman  
School Counselor  
615-490-5090  
huffmanp@wilsonk12tn.us