

## **The Greenville News**

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### **Students at risk of dropping out to get academic support**

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STAFF WRITER

The Greenville County school district agreed Tuesday to partner with two other organizations to help lower the local dropout rate by creating a new support organization.

Frank Holleman, an attorney and co-chair of Graduate Greenville, said the district would be joined by the United Way and the Alliance for Quality Education in finding ways to keep children in school until they graduate.

"It's designed to harness community energy and resources to increase the number of young people who graduate from high school in four years," he said.

The plan for the organization was discussed 18 months ago with a board that met with guidance counselors and students who dropped out of school as well as similar organizations around the country to devise strategies to keep the students in school.

"There's so many different things you could do, but we assembled three work teams of community leaders to address three categories of strategies," Holleman said. The first strategy would focus on raising expectations and working with the school district on in-school strategies that would improve student attendance.

Another group would focus on obtaining community resources to offer extra help to help students succeed, and the third group would act as the organization's mouthpiece to get the word out in the community to students and parents about the importance of education.

"It has started in the sense that groups are meeting, but we are hoping this fall to begin on the groundwork with the kids," Holleman said.

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