

## KDS DAR High School in Alabama Top 40

According to U.S. News & World Report, KDS DAR High School is ranked 37<sup>th</sup> in the state of Alabama. KDS High School was ranked 37<sup>th</sup> out of 255 high schools in Alabama and 2,619<sup>th</sup> in the nation. The school was ranked based on their performance on state-required tests and how well they prepare students for college. “Not everyone is going to college after they graduate and it is our job to prepare these students for life after high school. We offer Advance Placement courses, dual enrollment, career ready programs, and set goals for the students,” said Principal Stacy Anderton.

One unique route the students can participate in at KDS is the Lakeside Academy program. Last year, this program had 52 students who were involved in some capacity. It is geared for students

who are at risk of dropping out or cannot attend regular classes. For instance, if the student needed to be at home to care for a family member, this program is designed to help the student graduate. All unit tests are taken on the campus, but a lot of the work can be done at the student’s home.

Graduation rates have increased largely because of the Lakeside Academy program. With the Lakeside program, the students still feel a part of the school. They receive the announcements just like the typical student and are told of other important events going on at the school.

Besides Lakeside, the school has participated in the Practice ACT prior to it being required this spring. The school wanted to see the improvements and take steps to help their students reach their goals to benchmark. The school offers incentives, such as being able to exempt a test, for the students who meet their goals.

“For those students who make 25 or better on their ACT, we place their names on the bulletin board so people can see them when they walk into our school,” Kathy Culbertson, KDS’s counselor said. “This is another way we show our students we’re proud of their hard work.” KDS is working on having all of their students career or college ready. Innovative programs like Lakeside Academy and an emphasis on making students career or college ready are just two examples of why KDS High School is ranked in the top 40 in Alabama.

