



Executive Summary

Leslie County High School

Leslie County

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Description of the School.....	2
School's Purpose.....	3
Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement.....	5
Additional Information	6

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Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

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Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Leslie County High School is home to 500 students in grades 9-12. This is the only high school in the county and it is the largest school in the district, serving students from diverse areas in the county. The area is a sparsely-populated, mountainous region where many of the students travel approximately 30 miles to reach the school. Above all, poverty is an issue that overwhelms the community. The Kentucky Division of Nutrition and Health Services estimates that 69.25% of the student body at Leslie County High School receive free or reduced lunches. The most recent United States Census establishes that 30% of individuals in the county are in poverty and that only 40% of individuals are currently employed. Most compelling is the fact that per capita income is only \$11,674 compared to the national average of \$21,587. Thus, individuals in the county receive nearly half of typical earnings than others across Kentucky and the nation. Also, the disability rate of 33% is high compared to the national average of 19%. Another significant factor is that only 54% of residents 25 years and older have a high school diploma compared to the national average of 80%. Also, only 9% possess a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to the national average of 24%. In 2009, Leslie County High School ranked among the persistently low-achieving high schools in Kentucky with a calculated transitional index of 61 (Prichard Committee & Kentucky Association of School Councils, 2009). The school was assigned three educational recovery specialists by the Kentucky Department of Education to coach and build capacity for improvement based on the fact that the school had been in decline since 2002. The results of a scholastic audit in 2009 suggested a re-staffing model as the Turn Around method but the Commissioner of Education allowed the school to integrate the Transformation Model, to keep the assigned principal--contingent on future performance, and to increase onsite state assistance. Since inception of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the school had only achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2010 because it met requirements of reducing novice in reading and mathematics by 10%. History of the school indicates that the school had not met AYP since 2003.

Two years ago, following the implementation of the Transformation Model, LCHS student achievement rates reflected a changing trend in student scores. Through the implementation of a revised curriculum, enhanced research-based instructional strategies, and increased technology, student success at LCHS on state and national assessments improved dramatically; making LCHS the top performing high school in the region, and the 16th ranked high school in the state on a transitional index. However, assessment regulation changes that occurred as a result of Senate Bill 1 changed the outcome of success at LCHS. According to the assessment results from the 2011-2012 school year, LCHS moved from being a top 25 school, to being a 'Needs Improvement' school. State assessment data collected on the End-of-Course exams in English 2 (Reading) indicated that only 39.3% of students are proficient or higher and in Algebra 2 (Math), only 15.8% are meeting this goal. Despite the small setback, LCHS has returned to the top as scores released in September 2013 indicate that our school is now in the Top 10% of Kentucky High Schools and has been deemed a Distinguished school.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

Vision

Leslie County High School students will leave our institution college and career ready as critical problem solvers prepared to face the future.

Mission

"All Students can learn based on what WE do."

Beliefs

- *Student learning is top priority.
- *Pertinent school and student data will inform all decisions concerning student growth and achievement.
- *Understanding that student IQ's are dynamic as a result of learning practices; a mindset of high expectation ensures student growth.
- *Our school exists to promote the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students and focus on issues within our circle of influence.
- *Good role models influence student behaviors positively by demonstrating respect and responsibility.
- *College and career-ready students result from a highly-effective structure where each stakeholder understands his role within the vision of the organization.

Leslie County High School
Non-Negotiables (2012-2013)

School Culture:

- *Vision and Mission posted in classroom
- *Teacher behaviors evident that support the mission
- *Room is organized and conducive to learning
- * Bell-to-bell student engagement
- *Quality student products with appropriate feedback posted
- *Use of a systematic process to analyze data or to solve reoccurring issues within our circle of influence
- *All stakeholders, in every educational setting, will practice professionalism and accept responsibility for the outcome.
- *Each employee will plan and align, in conjunction with other stakeholders, a PGP goal along with appropriate action steps

Academic Performance:

- *Rigorous, student-lead instructional practices
- *Daily lessons will include a variety of high-yield strategies and learning lead by students that ensures critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Data to Guide Instruction:

*Student accountability is evidenced through his/her maintenance of a Student Data Notebook to analyze pertinent data and set goals toward

Executive Summary

Leslie County High School

College and Career Readiness.

*Teacher accountability is evidenced through his/her maintenance of a Teacher Data Notebook to analyze and track student data for interventions.

*Administrators and school officials will set and flex a master schedule and regroup students and curriculum based on data analysis.

Our beliefs were created under the categories of our big rocks so that action plans could be easily addressed to logical areas. Following this work, a walkthrough instrument was developed to place concrete evidence of our beliefs on an instrument as the criteria for the observers to consider. Ultimately, this walkthrough data then provides a working knowledge of how successfully we have shared the vision and whether it has actually impacted student growth and achievement.

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Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Notable Achievements

Leslie County High School has formed a leadership team whose sole purpose has been to analyze the audit results and to plan methods for addressing each of the suggested growth areas. This leadership team has met weekly, in collaboration with the ASSIST team, in order to develop and carry out an action plan which has included but is not limited to redefining the role of each of the district office administrators to encompass gaps from the audit report. Each staff member has become a part of the SBDM committee in order to share the school vision on a more personal level.

Data is truly part of everything at LCHS. Students, teachers, and administrators routinely look at a variety of data to check progress against goals and to change their practices. The students and the staff know that the data will inform instruction, scheduling, teacher assignments and other aspects of their school experience. At LCHS, data are used to improve instruction and the consistent use of data has become part of the culture of the school.

School staff and Educational Recovery Staff have been asked to share their work at many state and national conferences including The Innovation Summit, Kentucky Association of School Councils, and KAAC. Leslie County has shared with numerous other school teams and at various turn around sessions. Our team spoke to the Kentucky School Board meeting on our turn around process. The principal was also chosen as a Champion of Change and spoke in Washington D.C. Leslie's work has been profiled twice by the United States Department of Education and in a PBS special that aired on a variety of channels. LCHS was selected to participate in the Innovation Summit to present a proficient Best Practice concerning the data notebook initiative. In addition, our school was recognized as being in the Top 10% of Kentucky High Schools and a Distinguished school.

Areas of Improvement

At Leslie County High, we know that we still have "miles to go before we sleep."

- * We must continually build processes and systems as part of a continuous improvement cycle for school improvement.
- * Rigor of content is still not nearly what it needs to be in Leslie County High classrooms. Work sessions and peer modeling must continue to set high expectations for instruction.
- * Leadership capacity is still being built within teachers in the building.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Highlights of Turnaround

Leslie County High School focused its turnaround efforts on three "main rocks": culture, academic performance, and data-based decision-making. The leadership team continuously reviews the school's 30/60/90 day action plan to ensure that all activities link to these three goals. Teachers, school leadership and some students review the school's 30 day plan each month and uses "Plus/Delta" exercises to inform and revise strategies.

As a part of reform efforts, the high school also implemented "linkage charts," a tool based on the Baldrige process for helping organizations make systemic change. The leadership team develops and reviews these charts frequently to analyze the responsibilities for different staff positions in the building. Through this process, the team can identify responsibilities that remain unaccounted for and assign responsibilities based on the strengths of team members.

Overall, the process of using linkage charts to identify responsibilities and aligning positions to the school's main goals were central to building the capacity of the school leadership team. The linkage charts provided a clear roadmap from staff strengths and responsibilities to the ultimate goals set for the school.

Signs of Progress

Prior to implementing the transformation model under the School Improvement Grant program, Leslie County High School ranked 224 out of 230 high schools in the state. One year later, in the 2011-12 school year, Leslie County High School increased its ranking to 17 out of 230 high schools. For the previous reporting year, LCHS is now in the Top 10% of Kentucky High Schools and is now considered a Distinguished school.