



2025-2026 Phase One: Executive Summary for Schools_09282025_18:48

2025-2026 Phase One: Executive Summary for Schools

James T Alton Middle School
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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?

James T. Alton Middle School serves students in grades 6-8. In the 2025-2026 school year we have approximately 576 students. We are located in the small town of Vine Grove, Kentucky. There have been no major changes within the community over the last 5 years; however, Vine Grove is located adjacent to Ft. Knox military base, which causes our school to have a very transient student population. About 49% of our students receive free and reduced lunches, 40% are minorities, and 15% of our students have IEPs.

School Stakeholders

Identify and describe the school's stakeholder groups. How does the school ensure stakeholder involvement and engagement in the improvement planning process?

JTA has a montly Parent Forum in which parents and administrators meet together monthly to discuss issues important to them and to organize improvement efforts. Our Site-based decision making council (SBDM) is made up of 2 parents and 3 teachers. They, along with the principal meet monthly to review policies and procedures, budgeting, and scheduling decisions. Working under the SBDM are committees. The Social Media Committee is our storytelling squad—capturing the heart, hustle, and humor of life at JTA. From spotlighting student achievements to sharing staff shout-outs, event highlights, and behind-the-scenes magic, this team keeps our community informed and inspired. The Parent and Family Engagement Committee is all about connection, celebration, and collaboration. We work to strengthen the bridge between home and school by planning meaningful events, sharing important information, and creating opportunities for families to feel welcomed, informed, and involved. The Rewards and Incentives Committee is all about celebrating the wins—big and small. We design systems that recognize student effort, staff excellence, and those magical moments that make school feel like home. The PBIS committee is all about building a school culture where positive behavior isn't just expected—it's celebrated. We create systems that reinforce kindness, responsibility, and respect through recognition, incentives, and consistent expectations. Finally, the GT committee reviews student data and makes recommendations for GT placement and assists teachers in implementing Gifted Student Services Plans. JTA also has a student government organization (Student Council). These students meet with teachers and the principal regularly to discuss issues that are important to them. These students often present suggestions to the SBDM for their consideration.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and supplementary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs, including the year in which they were last reviewed or revised. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students and how stakeholders are involved in its development.

Mission Statement: At JTA, the child is at the center of our work and the guide to our purpose. School is more than just a place of learning subjects. JTA focuses on every aspect of our students, offering them support tailored to each of their unique needs. We are dedicated to providing an inclusive, enriching, nurturing and rigorous environment where each child is seen as capable and encouraged to grow to their fullest potential academically, emotionally, and socially. Our partnership of students, parents, and educators lay the foundation for a love of learning that lasts a lifetime. Vision Statement: Everyone Succeeds. No Exceptions. No Excuses. Belief statements: These statements encompass the universal beliefs of James T. Alton Middle School as a student centered facility embracing academic achievement and personal growth. Parents, community members, and visitors will be accepted and valued as unique contributors and participants in the educational advancement and character development of our students. Students will have a first-hand understanding of care and trust and will develop their feelings of self worth through positive student-to-student and student-to-adult interactions. Families of students will have a variety of resources available to them and will be encouraged to maintain effective communication with teachers and staff. Faculty and staff will work together to preserve established traditions, focus on improvement, promote motivation and encouragement, provide professional leadership, and uphold our core values. Faculty and staff will remain committed to our vision and will reflectively review our Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) to promote ongoing progress and continuous improvement. JTA provides a wide variety of offerings for our students including band, physical education/health, art, and careers. Academically, JTA provides classes in math, science, reading, social studies, and writing all on different levels so our students can be met at their ability level to ensure success. Students who have a difficult time in reading and math will receive research-based interventions during MTSS classes. Students are placed in classes through evaluation of testing assessments like IReady, KSA, PEG, and IXL and other research-based programs. Through consultation with parents and students, schedules are created for students with their best interest in mind. Other than the Kentucky state assessment, other assessments are monitored frequently for student growth and to determine gaps in skills that teachers can use to target instruction to individual needs. Teachers also use this data to goal set with students a minimum of twice a year. Finally, JTA emphasizes the 4 P's. These are the Trojan virtues of being Prompt, Prepared, Polite, and Productive. These virtues are promoted regularly, recognized, praised, and rewarded. Students can earn Trojan Bucks when these virtues are witnessed by others. In addition to athletics, JTA also offers a variety of opportunities for students to participate in sports and clubs. JTA offers football, basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, and archery. Students who are interested can also participate in track and swimming through the high school program. JTA offers BETA Club, Student Council, and Academic Team. In addition to these clubs that meet both during school and after school, JTA has a variety of clubs that meet monthly during the school day, which gives every student the opportunity to participate in a club. Some of these include: Pep Club, Art Club, Chess Club, and

Community Service Club. These are just a few of the clubs that JTA offers its students.

Notable Achievements

Describe the school's notable achievements in the last three years.

JTA has accomplished a lot in the last couple of years. We have increased our social media presence and worked hard to improve the overall image of the school. Last year, JTA's BETA club had students place 1st in science and 1st in social studies at the state convention. Our Bowl Team also took first place. This same Quiz Bowl team went on to place 5th at Nationals. Our academic team 1 took first place at the district competition, with several of our students placing in individual competitions. Our band went to the KMEA district concert assessment and got an overall exemplary rating. Our peer buddies group was recognized in the local newspaper, we have started counseling groups and monthly SEL lessons, and we have implemented a new PBIS system. JTA also hosted a transition day for our incoming 6th graders to meet teachers and go over expectations as well as a very successful Open House. Academically, JTA is poised for great gains, and we are working diligently to improve in all areas. Over the next three years JTA will continue to utilize IReady testing and progress monitoring tools to continue growth. JTA focuses on student engagement and ownership of their learning. JTA celebrates small and large successes of staff and students. Each month we celebrate students based on the Portrait of a Learner Competencies. Each trimester we celebrate students who have met PBIS requirements for behavior, grades, and attendance. We also celebrate honor roll, and we give Trojan Bucks for students who exhibit our Trojan Virtues and meet PBIS expectations. We have House competitions to inspire growth in the areas of academics, personal growth, community service, and overall student growth. JTA is welcoming parents and community members back into the building post Covid, and we are trying to get a little more "back to normal" by hosting regular dances and other special events such as Halloween in the Halls. JTA offers a grade recovery program each trimester once progress reports determine students who are in trouble academically. We are also working in PLCs to improve instruction around special education. Two years ago we were a TSI school for special education students, but we were able to remove the TSI classification last year.

Areas of Improvement

Describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

JTA will ensure students receive consistent, clear, and challenging instruction that meets their needs. In order to help families support their students at home, this year JTA will work to streamline assignment communication and formats, offer tutoring and ESS programs, and will add homework schedules and calendars to help families stay informed. In an effort to strengthen emotional support systems and reduce behavioral disruptions, we will strengthen SEL programming, revisit bullying policies, and provide more visible support systems like counseling, peer mediation, or restorative practices. We will also work to improve consistency and clarity in communication between school and families by standardizing communication across classrooms, encouraging regular teacher newsletters, and

exploring platforms that allow real-time updates on student progress and behavior. To build a more positive, inclusive, and respectful school environment, JTA will invest in student recognition events, reinforce behavioral expectations, and promote a culture of belonging and pride in being a JTA Trojan. And to strengthen relationships between families and the school community, JTA will expand family engagement programming, offer flexible event times, and create more opportunities for parents to connect with staff and each other.

Additional Information

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

JTA is committed to project-based learning, which supports the district's Portrait of a Learner framework. Teachers have been trained in Project Based Learning, and they routinely recognize students for displaying the Portrait of a Learner Competencies. Our Saturday School initiative has been instrumental in helping students recover credit from classes they would have failed. In the last 3 years, we have only had 1 student fail a grade. This is largely due to the hard work and dedication of our teachers who gather work for these students and our Saturday School teachers who sit with them and help them catch up on missing assignments.

Attachment Summary

| Attachment Name | Description | Associated Item(s) |
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