

Program Review Audit Pilot

Purpose of Pilot Process

In response to Senate Bill 1 (2009), an audit process was designed and implemented for the Program Reviews. The purpose of the pilot was to review as much data as possible concerning the identified program in order to establish degree of consistency between ratings, rationales/evidences, and perceptions of students, parents, and faculty. Recommendations for improvement, as well as commendations for effective practices, were the result.

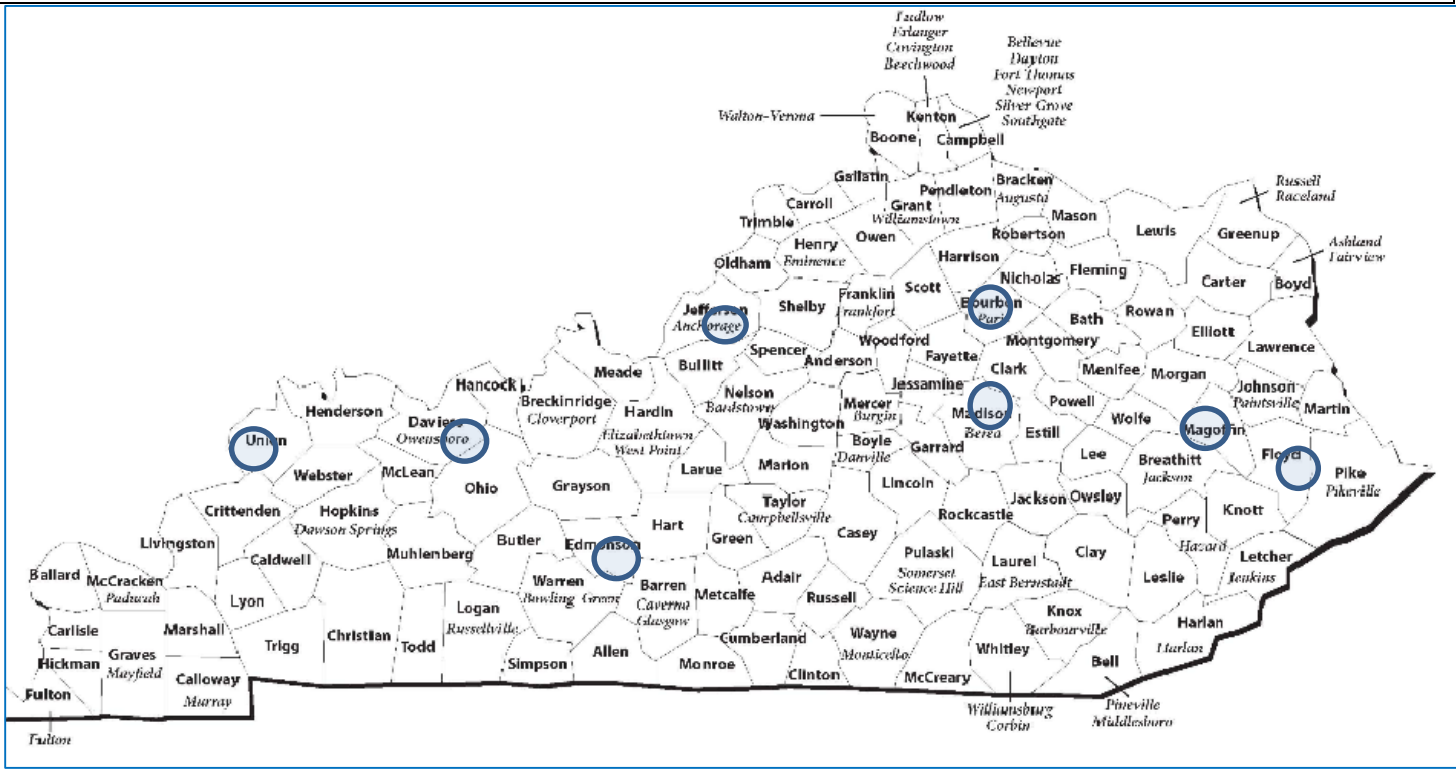
Ultimately, scholastic programs are intended to provide opportunities for students to grow and learn. This happens when programs are planned, implemented and evaluated systemically, keeping the focus on the quality and degree of access and exposure to the key knowledge and skills all students experience in the program area.

Throughout March and April 2015, eight schools were selected, two in each of the four program review areas to pilot the proposed audit process. Schools were selected based on a number of demographic and achievement indicators. In order to keep the process manageable yet beneficial, the team looked deeply at approximately 25% of the indicators of the selected program review by accessing information in ASSIST and reviewing evidence ahead of the site visit, and by conducting interviews and reviewing other relevant information and evidence on site.

Schools were asked to share some key evidences around chosen indicators that were scored for the Program Reviews submitted in 2014. Teacher and parent surveys were provided for the schools which were written to gain support for the chosen indicators of the review. Additionally; a four-person team visited each of the schools and conducted on-site interviews of teachers, parents, students, and the principal – there was also a chance to review additional sources of evidence/artifacts. Toward the end of the site visit, the team discussed their findings with the school principal in order to establish recommendations and commendations designed to inform continuous improvement of the program at the building level. These commendations and recommendations were to be co-presented by the school principal and the audit team to the faculty at the end of the visit. Although time spent on site involved conferring with individuals and groups, findings did not name or otherwise identify individuals.

Schools Selected for the Audit Pilot	
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	Writing	K-3	Arts & Humanities	PL/CS
	Osborne Elementary – Floyd County	South Magoffin Elementary Magoffin County	Bourbon Co. High School Bourbon County	Jeffersontown High School Jefferson County
	Madison Middle Madison County	Estes Elementary Owensboro Independent	Edmonson 5/6 Center Edmonson County	Uniontown Elementary Union County
2 high schools, 1 middle school, 1 5/6 school, 4 elementary schools				



School locations across the state

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Audit Process

In an attempt to gain the most information in a one-day audit, the team chose to examine approximately 25% of the indicators listed in the review. Each of the program reviews are divided into four domains: curriculum and instruction; formative and summative assessment; professional learning; and administrative support and monitoring. The 25% characteristic review was divided among the four domains in order to assess each part of the entire program. Schools were sent 4-6 indicators several weeks prior to the site visits and asked to submit 2-3 sources of evidence which best demonstrated the school's reported score. In addition to the 4-6 indicators selected by the KDE team, the school was asked to select one additional characteristic in each domain and submit evidence for those as well. The KDE team was also able to access the ASSIST rationale provided by the school as well as the evidence list the school submitted for the 2013-2014 Program Review.

As a result of having the evidence prior to the audit, the team was able to prepare questions in the areas that needed additional support in order to validate the score reported by the school. Once the teams arrived at the school, a final "wildcard" characteristic was randomly chosen. The school was asked to produce 2-3 sources of evidence to support the assigned score for this characteristic. Interviews of teachers, students, parents/school-based decision making council and the principal were conducted in order to seek even more evidence – the goal of the team was to try to "prove the school right" in their own program review scoring.

As the team worked through the interviews and evidence, two separate meetings were held with the principal to attempt to match evidence and scores with considerations for improving programs. At the end of the day, the teams debriefed with the principal, providing an overview for growth as well as some commendations for things in place that were successful.

The principal, with the support of the audit team presented briefly to the staff, highlighting a few areas of growth as well as a few commendations. A full report was promised to the principal and the school within two weeks.

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Overall Findings

School Data:

Each program review is comprised of four domains: curriculum and instruction, formative and summative assessment, professional learning, and leadership support and monitoring. Each domain has indicators on which the school must rate itself. Each subject area program review has a different number of indicators: Writing – 42; K-3 – 27; Practical Living/Career Studies – 56; Arts & Humanities – 43. During the audit process 81 indicators were examined (20 writing, 18 K-3, 25 PL/CS, 18 A&H).

Overall Data

- Out of 81 indicators examined, the audit team disagreed with the school score 63% of the time – every disagreement was an over-score by the school
 - C & I – disagreed 68% (school over-scored)
 - F& S Assessment – disagreed 69% (school over-scored)
 - PL – disagreed 39% (school over-scored)
 - Leadership – disagreed 57% (school over-scored)
- **Disagreements by more than one score cell**
 - 37 C & I indicators – 11 out of 37, 30% by more than one score cell
 - 17 F & S Assessment indicators – 6 out of 17, 35% by more than one score cell
 - 13 PL indicators - 3 out of 13, 23% by more than one score cell
 - 14 Leadership Characters – 4 out of 14, 29% by more than one score cell

Writing Program Review

- Out of 20 indicators examined, the audit team disagreed with the school score 75% of the time – each disagreement was an over-score by the school
 - 7 C & I – disagreed 100% (school over-scored)
 - 4 F & S Assessment – disagreed 100% (school over-scored)
 - 5 PL – disagreed 20% (school over-scored)
 - 4 Leadership – disagreed 75% (school over-scored)

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Arts & Humanities Review

- Out of 18 indicators examined, the audit team disagreed with the school score 94% of the time – each disagreement was an over-score by the school
 - 10 C & I – disagreed 100% (school over-scored)
 - 4 F & S Assessment– disagreed 100% (school over-scored)
 - 2 PL – disagreed 100% (school over-scored)
 - 2 Leadership – disagreed 50% (school over-scored)

K-3 Program Review

- Out of the 18 indicators examined, the audit team disagreed with the school score 50% of the time – each disagreement was an over-score by the school
 - 8 C & I - disagreed 37% (school over-scored)
 - 4 F & S Assessment– disagreed 75% (school over-scored)
 - 4 PL – disagreed 50% (school over-scored)
 - 2 Leadership – disagreed 50% (school over-scored)

PL/CS Program Review

- Out of 25 indicators examined, the audit team disagreed with the school score 40% of the time – each disagreement was an over-score by the school
 - 12 C & I – disagreed 42% (school over-scored)
 - 3 F & S Assessment – disagreed 67% (school over-scored)
 - 4 PL – agreed 100%
 - 6 Leadership – disagreed 60% (school over-scored)

Overall Findings/Patterns

- ❖ Schools across the state are having difficulty matching evidence with the language of the Program Review Rubric. Moreover, schools are not familiarizing themselves with the rubric language enough to be able to understand what would constitute reasonable/defensible evidence.
- ❖ There seems to be confusion surrounding the Program Review. Schools are still viewing the Program Reviews as an “extra,” not as a documentation of their program – whether it is writing,

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K-3, Arts & Humanities, or PL/CS. There is not school-wide buy-in when it comes to the Program Review.

- ❖ The data results clearly demonstrate an over-scoring issue that is consistent for most schools in the audit process. Statistically, the disagreement rate averaged 58% in total. This finding indicates that schools do not understand the procedure for evaluating their programs. One recommendation from this pilot is to encourage schools to revisit the purposes of program reviews, which include:
 - Improving the *quality* teaching and learning for all students in all programs
 - Allowing equal *access* to all students the skills that will assist them in being productive citizens
 - Allowing student *demonstration* of understanding beyond a paper-and-pencil test
 - Ensuring a *school-wide natural integration* of the program skills across all contents, beyond the program areas.
- ❖ Providing triangulated sources of evidence was more sufficient than a single source to verify practice and program improvement. For example, meeting notes from a Professional Learning Community meeting describing focus or purpose, next steps, follow up, impact of implementing a strategy, refinement, etc.; a leadership team's walkthrough notes of classroom observations and suggestions for improvement; and teacher reflections on professional learning impact on their practice and/or influence on student work could be three possible sources that support a rating.
- ❖ Aligning evidence to each of the components within a characteristic is critical when self-scoring. Attending to the language of the rubric not only provides scoring criteria, but provides next steps to improvement.
- ❖ Devising effective structures to plan, implement and evaluate programs systemically helped schools align evidence to the rubric.
- ❖ Scoring by schools was generally higher than those of the audit team. (*No scores were changed* during the pilot; however, suggested ratings for each characteristic based on evidence submitted for review and the on-site visit were offered in each school's report).

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Pilot Audit Issues

- A desk audit alone would not provide a sufficient understanding of a school's program and improvement efforts.
- The audit process requires extensive prep work to be able to gather or substantiate missing or unclear evidence on-site. The average number of hours of prep work for each individual school was four hours per team member prior to the audit, eight hours on site and twelve to 15 hours writing the report (24 hours per team member total).
- Teacher and student interviews were valuable sources of evidence; however, the questions for the interviews have to be specifically targeted to the presented evidence and indicators being audited. The KDE team needs to do upfront work (meeting prior to visit, writing additional questions based on evidence submitted) and limit questions for the interviewees to only ones that are essential and provide the missing or unclear information needed.
- Including the random, or "wildcard" characteristic selected upon arrival for the site visit provided little to no additional information to the findings; however, did verify that evidences were readily available.
- 25% of indicators (approximately) provided a sufficient overview of the program itself and four team members was an acceptable number to complete the work in a timely manner.

Proposed Plan

Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, the proposed plan is to audit 24 schools – 6 in each of the four areas: writing, arts & humanities, PL/CS, and K-3. World Language/Global Competency will not be audited until all schools have implemented for a full year (2016-17). Each audit team will consist of four members with two alternates. The teams will schedule one audit per area per month starting in September and continuing through the school year. The goal is to complete the six audits per area and present reports back to schools by the end of April. The teams will have the schedules and be able to block out time (approximately 3 full days per person per audit) in advance, including the report writing.

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The team members, including the alternates will be trained in all aspects of the audit process prior to the beginning of the school year.

KDE program staff, including audit team members, will remain in a position of providing ongoing leadership, service and support to schools in the interest of program improvement, including offering “audit training” to interested district/school staff so that they may use the process for internal continuous improvement.

The primary policy issue that will need further exploration and clarification includes the process of potentially changing school ratings/accountability results when schools are found to be over-rating and are not responsive to recommendations for program improvements or revisiting their own ratings.

Conclusion

Program Reviews are intended to provide opportunities for students to have access and opportunity to grow and learn in areas that tend to be more performance-oriented and/or include skills and dispositions that are not easily assessed or evaluated with traditional testing. When these programs are planned, implemented and evaluated systemically, keeping the focus on the quality and degree of access and exposure to the key knowledge and skills all students’ experience in the program area, they are considered proficient or distinguished programs.

The practice of accurate self-scoring is critical to schools. This proposed audit plan is a strong way to begin to support schools in their pursuit of accurate scoring and growth of their programs, including instructional practices, aligned and enacted curriculum, student work samples, formative and summative assessments, professional learning and support services, and administrative support and monitoring.