Hardin County
District Review Report

10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

District Review Executive Summary

Hardin County School District

10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

Nannette Johnston, Superintendent

Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted a review of Hardin County School District during the period of 10/28/2007 - 11/2/2007. This district's last combined accountability index was 79.9 and its classification was Non-Classified. Here are the most relevant facts and next step recommendations from the review.

District Deficiencies and Next Steps in Supporting its Low-Performing Schools

1. Deficiency	District and school leadership do not systematically monitor to ensure the implementation of all district programs and their impact on student achievement.
Next Steps	The superintendent should lead the central office staff in the development and implementation of a comprehensive and systematic monitoring process for all district programs. This will allow district and school staff to determine the impact of programs and their requisite allocations of resources on the achievement of instructional and organizational goals and on the achievement of all students. This monitoring system should be based on commonly understood and clearly communicated measures and should include supervisory input as well as input from the level at which implementation occurs. The process should evaluate the effectiveness of programs at both the design and implementation levels in order to allow district and school leadership to determine where and how program adjustments should be made and whether or not programs should be continued.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
2. Deficiency	District leadership does not ensure consistent and equitable implementation of academic and behavior standards or equitable access to curriculum and instructional practices.
Next Steps	District leadership should ensure all teachers receive professional development to train them to work collaboratively to implement least restrictive environments, challenge all students to learn at high levels, emphasize intellectual, cultural and behavioral needs of students and address multiple learning styles of targeted student populations.

District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
3. Deficiency	The district does not have a fully functioning curriculum aligned to Kentucky Combined Curriculum Documents v4.1.
Next Steps	A curriculum document that is rigorous, intentional and aligned should become a road map to guide the development of units and lesson plans and to identify what students should know and be able to do. The effective use of the document should be monitored regularly using analysis of individual student work to determine mastery of student learning.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
4. Deficiency	Varied and effective instructional strategies are not aligned with a challenging curriculum and authentic assessments and monitored for implementation in all classrooms.
Next Steps	Instructional practices should be tightly aligned with curriculum and assessment. The district should lead regular and continuous monitoring of instructional practices in all classrooms to ensure that they are rigorous, differentiated and proven to advance student learning and that they are supported by the resources necessary to sustain them.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	
5. Deficiency	District leadership does not ensure that the allocation of resources is targeted to have the greatest impact on student achievement.
Next Steps	The superintendent should lead the board of education and central office staff in the development and implementation of a systematic and comprehensive process to ensure that necessary district resources are effectively targeted to support schools that have high numbers of at-risk students and are struggling to meet federal, state and local goals. The process should include ongoing monitoring of the impact of those resources on student achievement and a process to guide necessary revisions.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	

Timeline/Person Responsible	
6. Deficiency	District leadership support for school councils is not focused on developing leadership capacity.
Next Steps	District support for school councils should expand beyond technical assistance toward a proactive program targeted to the development of a school and district partnership to increase and sustain high achievement for all students. A team of school council liaisons under the direction of a coordinator should work directly with assigned councils, attend meetings of the council to serve as a resource and provide feedback to district leadership about what services should be provided to councils. The district support for school councils should be focused on the development of council leadership capacity.
District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles	
Timeline/Person Responsible	

Hardin County

KDE 2007 District Review Report

At-a-Glance

The charts below indicate the percentage of indicators in each standard for the following four performance levels:

4- Exemplary level of development and implementation

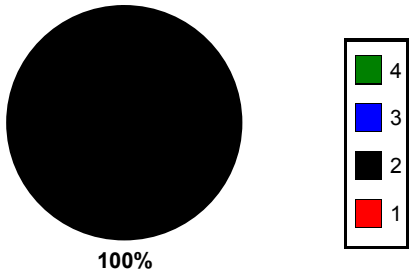
3- Fully functional and operational level of development and implementation

2- Limited development or partial implementation

1- Little or no development and implementation

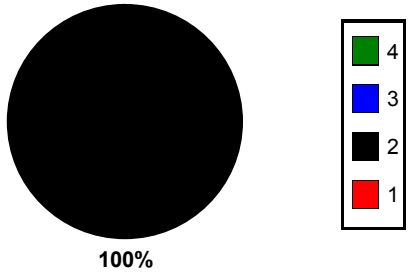
Standard 1 - Curriculum

Total Indicators: 7



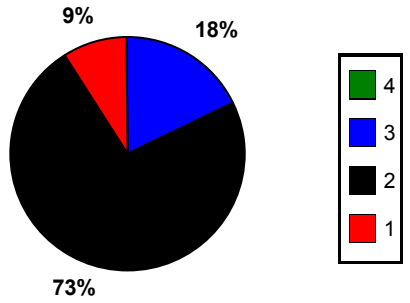
Standard 4 - School Culture

Total Indicators: 11



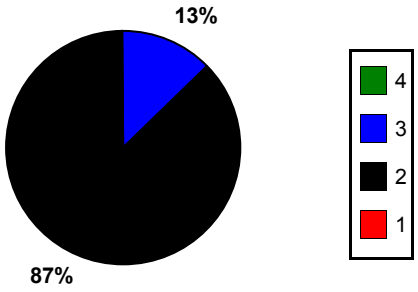
Standard 7 - Leadership

Total Indicators: 11



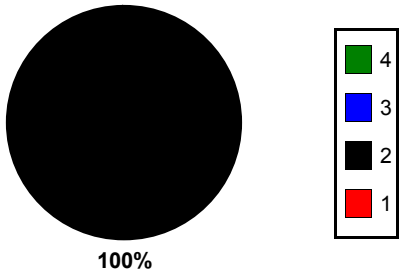
Standard 2 - Classroom Evaluation/Assessment

Total Indicators: 8



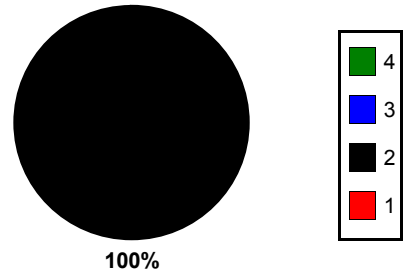
Standard 5 - Student, Family and Community Support

Total Indicators: 5



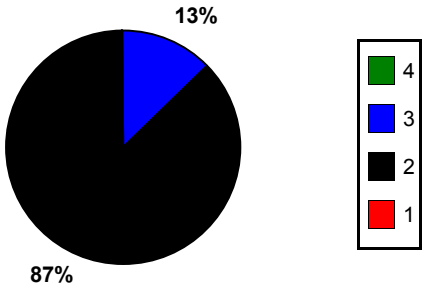
Standard 8 - School Organization and Fiscal Resources

Total Indicators: 10



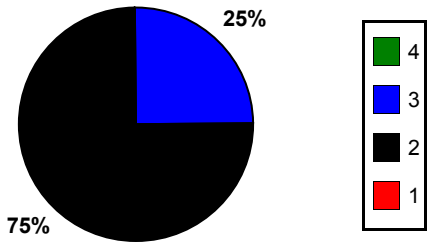
Standard 3 - Instruction

Total Indicators: 8



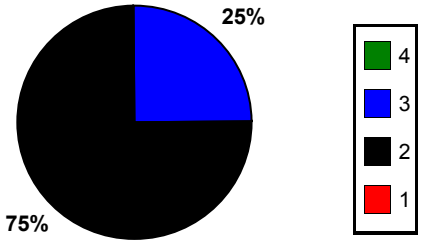
Standard 6 - Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation

Total Indicators: 12



Standard 9 - Comprehensive and Effective Planning

Total Indicators: 16



9 STANDARDS AND 88 INDICATORS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - Hardin County

Standard - 1 - Academic Performance

Curriculum

1.1a Curriculum is aligned. Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment, Transformations

1.1b District initiates, facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards

1.1c District initiates, facilitates discussions to eliminate unnecessary overlaps

1.1d Evidence of vertical communication, intentional focus on key curriculum transition points

1.1e School curriculum provides specific links to continuing education

1.1f Systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing curriculum

1.1g Curriculum provides access to a common academic core

Standard - 2 - Academic Performance

Classroom Evaluation/Assessment

2.1a Classroom assessments frequent, rigorous, aligned with Kentucky's core content

2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment

2.1c Students can articulate what is required to be proficient

2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps

2.1e Assessments designed to provide feedback on student learning for instructional purposes

2.1f Performance standards communicated, evident in classrooms, observable in student work

2.1g Assessment and Accountability Program is coordinated by school and district leadership

2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed

Standard - 3 - Academic Performance

Instruction

3.1a Evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms

3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned

3.1c Instructional strategies/activities are consistently monitored...diverse student population

3.1d Teachers demonstrate content knowledge

3.1e Evidence teachers incorporate the use of technology

3.1f Instructional resources are sufficient to deliver the curriculum

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work

3.1h Homework is frequent and monitored, tied to instructional practice

Legend

Green 4- Exemplary level of development and implementation

Blue 3- Fully functional and operational level of development and implementation

Black 2- Limited development or partial implementation

Red 1- Little or no development and implementation

Standard - 4 - Learning Environment

School Culture

4.1a Leadership support for a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment

4.1b Leadership creates experiences that all children can learn

4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students

4.1d Teachers, staff involved in decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning

4.1e Teachers accept their role in student success

4.1f School assigns staff...opportunities for ALL students

4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families

4.1h Evidence that the teachers and staff care

4.1i Multiple communication strategies...to all stakeholders

4.1j Evidence that student achievement is highly valued

4.1k The school/district provides support...needs of all students

Standard - 5 - Learning Environment

Student, Family and Community Support

5.1a Families and the community are active partners

5.1b All students have access to all the curriculum

5.1c Reduce barriers to learning

5.1d Students are provided opportunities to receive additional assistance

5.1e School maintains an accurate student record system

Standard - 6 - Learning Environment - Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation

Professional Development

6.1a Support for the long-term professional growth of the individual staff members

6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity

6.1c Staff development priorities..alignment..goals for student performance

6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning

6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded

6.1f Professional development planning connect student achievement data

Professional Growth and Evaluation

6.2a Clearly defined evaluation process

6.2b Leadership provides the fiscal resources for the appropriate professional growth

6.2c Employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to improve staff proficiency

6.2d A process of personnel evaluation which meets or exceeds standards set in statute

6.2e The school/district improvement plan identifies specific instructional leadership needs

6.2f Evaluation process to provide teachers..change behavior and instructional practice

Standard - 7 - Efficiency

Leadership

7.1a Leadership has developed and sustained a shared vision

7.1b Leadership decisions focused on student academic data

7.1c All administrators have a growth plan

7.1d Evidence that the leadership team disaggregates data

7.1e Leadership ensures all instructional staff...access to curriculum related materials

7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected...instructional issues

7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources

7.1h School/district leadership provides policy and resource infrastructure

7.1i Process for the development and the implementation of council policy

7.1j SBDM council has an intentional focus on student academic performance

7.1k Principal demonstrates leadership skills in academic performance, learning environment, efficiency

Standard - 8 - Efficiency - School Organization and Fiscal Resources

Organization of the School

8.1a School is organized...use of all available resources

8.1b All students have access to all the curriculum

8.1c Staff are allocated based upon the learning needs of all students

8.1d Staff makes efficient use of instructional time

8.1e Staff...planning vertically and horizontally across content areas

8.1f Schedule aligned with the school's mission

Resource Allocation and Integration

8.2a Clearly defined process (in accordance with the school council allocation formula)

8.2b Budget reflects decisions directed by an assessment of need

8.2c Councils, school boards analyze funding and other resource requests

8.2d Resources are allocated and integrated to address student needs

Standard - 9 - Efficiency - Comprehensive and Effective Planning

Defining the School Vision, Mission, Beliefs

9.1a Collaborative process used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission

Development of the Profile

9.2a Planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data

9.2b Use data for school improvement planning

Defining Desired Results for Student Learning

9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research, expectations for student learning

9.3b Analyze their students' unique learning needs

9.3c Results for student learning are defined

Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness

9.4a Strengths and limitations are identified

9.4b Goals for building, strengthening capacity

Development of the Improvement Plan

9.5a Steps for school improvement aligned with improvement goals

9.5b Plan identifies resources, timelines

9.5c Evaluating the effectiveness of improvement plan

9.5d Improvement plan is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results

Implementation and Documentation

9.6a Plan is implemented as developed

9.6b School evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning

9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact

9.6d Evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement

Focus on Student Academic Performance

The district review report contains many important findings district leadership should consider. It will be the task of district leadership to read and prioritize the results from this report to plan for improving student performance.

- Carefully read the district review report for each school. Consider the implications of the report for each school's work and policies.
- Build greater understanding of new approaches to professional development and address the ways that stakeholders will have to work differently to improve instruction.
- Identify the implications of this report for stakeholders.
- Acknowledge and address the fact that current practice does not provide adequate opportunity for teachers and principals to carry out the demands of their work to ensure student success.

Kentucky Department of Education

District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

School District

10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted a review of Hardin County School District during the period of 10/21/2007 - 10/28/2007. This district's last combined accountability index was 79.9 and its classification was Non-Classified.

The district review team activities included a review of the documents collected for the district portfolio and profile and observations (217) as well as formal interviews and informal discussions with principals (27), teachers (100), school counselors (2), school psychologists (3), school council members (27), students (119), parents (57), classified staff members (40),volunteers (2), community members (15), central office certified staff members (17), curriculum specialists (7), board of education members (5), assistant superintendents (4) and the superintendent.

The Standards and Indicators for School Improvement rubric was the primary assessment instrument used during the visit. All collected data were considered in the development of this report.

The district review team report was based upon examination of the documents provided in the district portfolio, interviews and on-site experiences and observations of the review team. The specific findings and recommendations are organized under the headings of Academic Performance, Learning Environment and Efficiency. Each of the nine standards for success in Kentucky schools and districts is addressed in the following pages.

The chairperson of the team was Fred M. Simpson - District Administrator. The other team members were: Angie Fischer - Kentucky Department of Education Representative; Kristie Kelly - Kentucky Department of Education Representative; Jill L. Crowe - Teacher; Robin Roberts Hill - Kentucky Department of Education Representative; Gladys Louise Byrd - Kentucky Department of Education Representative; Gayle S. Musgrave - Teacher; Jack B. Musgrave - Building Administrator; E. Jean Roberts - Teacher; John A. Roberts - Higher Education Representative; Patricia H. Hale - Higher Education Representative; Sandra T. Shepherd - Parent; Melissa Sheets - Kentucky Department of Education Representative; Akeel Zaheer - Parent; Randell E. Harrison - Kentucky Department of Education Representative; Brenda S. Noble - District Administrator; Betty Bond - Building Administrator.

Academic Performance

The following Academic Performance Standards address curriculum, classroom evaluation/assessment and instruction.

Standard 1: The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned to state and local standards.

Standard 2: The school utilizes multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

Standard 3: The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student performance.

Learning Environment

The following Learning Environment Standards address school culture; student, family, and community support; and professional growth, development and evaluation.

Standard 4: The school/district functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

Standard 5: The school/district works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and development needs of students.

Standard 6: The school/district provides research-based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

Efficiency

The following Efficiency Standards address leadership, school structure and resources, and comprehensive and effective planning.

Standard 7: School/district instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture, and developing leadership capacity.

Standard 8: The organization of the school/district maximizes use of time, all available space and other resources to maximize teaching and learning and support high student and staff performance.

Standard 9: The school/district develops, implements and evaluates a comprehensive school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on teaching and learning.

Kentucky Department of Education

District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

School District

10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 1 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 7 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

1.1a There is evidence that the curriculum is aligned with the Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment, Transformations and the Program of Studies.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of Kentucky's Combined Curriculum Document v4.1, eWalk data and curriculum maps
- Interviews with central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

A variety of formats are used within the district to develop various forms of curriculum documents, but few are fully aligned to Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment v4.1, Program of Studies and Transformations: Kentucky's Curriculum Framework. These documents are not clearly communicated or used consistently to create curriculum maps or develop assessments. In many schools, Core Content for Assessment v4.1 is used as a curriculum. Alternative schools use various curriculum documents to diminish learning gaps for students who are moving from another learning environment on a temporary basis. Curriculum maps are used in some schools but are not clearly articulated across content areas.

1.1b The district initiates and facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (P-12).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of Kentucky's Combined Curriculum Document v4.1
- Interviews with central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

District leadership has initiated a dialogue to address curriculum articulation. Some school teams also dialogue regarding vertical alignment between middle and high schools but not on a consistent and intentional basis. This dialogue is not documented with minutes or agendas.

1.1c The district initiates and facilitates discussions between schools in the district in order to eliminate unnecessary overlaps and close gaps.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating 2

Review of Kentucky's Combined Curriculum Document v4.1, eWalk data and curriculum maps
Interviews with central office staff and certified instructional staff

District leadership has not developed a procedure that brings school staff together yearly to review the curriculum. Informal dialogue occurs to address gaps and overlaps in some content areas. School personnel state that the curriculum, instruction, assessment/gifted talented (CIA/GT) teachers are very helpful, but their time is often consumed with assessment and gifted and talented paperwork.

1.1d There is evidence of vertical communication with an intentional focus on key curriculum transition points within grade configurations (e.g., from primary to middle and middle to high).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of professional development logs
Interviews with central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

District leadership conducted a county-wide professional development day used for data disaggregation and horizontal curricular discussions. District facilitation of discussions at key transition points to resolve curricular issues is in the beginning stages. These discussions are not documented, and the process is not ongoing. The district has not collected and analyzed data on curricular gaps to determine if students experience success in transitioning from all feeder schools to the middle and high schools.

1.1e The school curriculum provides specific links to continuing education, life and career options.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of individual learning plans
Interviews with central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

District leadership does not systematically review the curriculum of each school to ensure that it has connections that provide post-secondary education and career options. District leadership does not regularly review the curriculum at each school to ensure that all students are prepared to be self-sufficient and productive citizens. The middle and high schools are developing individual learning plans, but this process is not monitored by district personnel. Some district personnel have attended training sessions on the development of individual learning plans.

1.1f There is in place a systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 **Curriculum**

Performance Rating 2

reviewing the curriculum.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of school council policies
Interviews with central office staff, principals, school council member and certified instructional staff

The board of education has a written curriculum policy, but no formal procedure has been established to monitor curriculum in all schools. School councils are required to submit school policies and minutes to district leadership. The district liaison monitors to ensure that all state required policies are in place, but procedures to address curricular issues have not been developed. School leadership is encouraged to develop common curricula, but district leadership does not systematically monitor the process. Collaborative discussions regarding curriculum development and implementation are not regular or ongoing.

1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of school master schedule and comprehensive district and school improvement plan
Interviews with central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

District leadership states that all students should enroll in rigorous classes, but master schedules for schools are not monitored to ensure equal access for all students. The Measures of Academic Progress test and teacher recommendations are used to place students in some classes. Accelerated and general courses for the same academic content are offered in some schools; therefore, some students may become tracked into a less rigorous curriculum.

Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 1 Curriculum

District leadership should develop and implement a plan to create a common curriculum aligned with Kentucky's Combined Curriculum Document v4.1 (Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment v4.1 and Program of Studies). District leadership should establish and lead committees composed of members from all content areas, grade levels and schools.

District leadership should develop and communicate a written procedure to address how the curriculum document is to be implemented, monitored and revised continuously to address overlaps, gaps, transitions, post-secondary education and career options. District leadership should monitor to ensure this procedure is implemented.

School leadership at the primary, middle and high school levels should be responsible for ensuring that a common curriculum is effectively implemented and access provided to identified student populations. Curriculum specialists should facilitate this process.

Resources:

Carr, Judy F. & Douglas E. Harris. Succeeding with Standards: Linking Curriculum, Assessment and Action Planning. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Alexandria, VA ISBN 0-87120-509-2.

Johnson, Ruth S. Using Data to Close the Achievement Gap. How to Measure Equity in Our Schools. Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA. c 2002. ISBN 0-7619-4509-1.

O'Shea, Mark R., From Standards to Success, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) 2005.

Thornburg, David, The New Basics, Education and the Future of Work in the Telematic Age, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2002.

Hardin County

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10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 2 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 7 indicators (88%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 1 indicator (13%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 3

2.1g Implementation of the state-required Assessment and Accountability Program is coordinated by school and district leadership.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of board of education policies
- Interviews with district and school leadership, district assessment coordinator and certified instructional staff

District leadership ensures that all persons involved in the state assessment process receive the mandated state assessment training and implement Kentucky's Administrative Code of Conduct for Assessment and Accountability. Assessment accommodations for individual students follow state regulations. District leadership monitors the implementation of local board policies and operational procedures that address the state's assessment and accountability system.

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 2

2.1a Classroom assessments of student learning are frequent, rigorous and aligned with Kentucky's core content.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of district assessment documents, professional development activities, comprehensive district improvement plan and walkthrough observation data
- Interviews with district and school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, classified staff and students
- Observations of classrooms and eWalks

District leadership provides some assistance to schools in the design and implementation of classroom assessments that are rigorous, authentic and aligned with Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment v4.1 (e.g., monthly leadership meetings, training of curriculum, instruction, assessment/gifted and talented [CIA/GT] personnel, professional development opportunities). There is, however, no regular monitoring of classroom assessment practices or products to ensure assessments are rigorous, intentionally standards-based and require problem-solving, inquiry and critical thinking. District leadership has recently begun doing learning walks to look for questioning, cueing and wait time strategies used by teachers in the classroom. Results of these walks are analyzed and some feedback is given. There is no plan or program to ensure on-going assistance to all schools. There is a limited district policy on assessment, but district leadership does not ensure that all school councils have a classroom assessment policy that requires frequent assessments with procedures that are consistently followed.

2.1b Teachers collaborate in the design of authentic assessment tasks aligned with core content subject matter.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of district assessment documents, professional development activities, comprehensive district improvement plan and walkthrough observation data
- Interviews with district and school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff and classified staff
- Observations of classrooms and eWalks

District leadership provides limited opportunities and resources for teachers to collaboratively design authentic assessment tasks. These opportunities are not always ongoing and intentionally planned. At the school level, teachers sometimes collaborate to design assessment tasks, but the tasks are not always rigorous, authentic and aligned with Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment v4.1. District leadership does not have a plan to monitor the effectiveness of these assessment tasks.

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 2

2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of walkthrough observation data
- Interviews with district and school leadership, certified instructional staff, parents, classified staff and students
- Observations of classrooms and eWalks

District leadership visits schools and classrooms and conducts learning walks. They sometimes communicate with students to determine if students can articulate what they should know and be able to do to be proficient in all content areas. While many students can do this, it is not systematically monitored by district leadership.

2.1d Test scores are used to identify curriculum gaps.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of district curriculum documents, professional development activities, Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment v4.1, Kentucky Performance Report, No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress report, comprehensive district improvement plan and walkthrough observation data
- Interviews with district and school leadership, school certified instructional staff and certified staff
- Observations of classrooms and eWalks

District leadership analyzes test score data from Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress Reports to identify gaps in the curriculum. This information is shared with school leadership and teachers. Results of the analysis are used in the development of the comprehensive district and school improvement plans. School leadership and staff are encouraged to continuously examine the results of multiple kinds of assessment to identify gaps in the curriculum. The use of Measures of Academic Progress testing of reading and math is required in grades 2 through 10. This data is used by teachers to identify learning needs for individual students. District leadership does not regularly provide assistance in analyzing this data and other assessment results, and it does not consistently monitor the efforts of school leadership and teachers.

2.1e Multiple assessments are specifically designed to provide meaningful feedback on student learning for instructional purposes.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of district assessment documents, professional development activities, comprehensive district improvement plan and walkthrough observation data

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

Performance Rating 2

Interviews with district and school leadership, school council members, parents, certified instructional staff and classified staff
Observations of classrooms and eWalks

District leadership communicates to teachers the expectation that they should regularly analyze multiple forms of assessment to inform and improve instruction but does not ensure that it occurs. District leadership, along with school leadership and sometimes the curriculum, instruction, assessment/gifted and talented teachers (CIA/GT), conduct learning walks. Results are analyzed, but individual feedback is seldom given to teachers. The district does not have a plan to systematically review and monitor teacher and school use of multiple assessments to ensure that the assessments are specifically designed to give meaningful feedback on student learning.

2.1f Performance standards are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of district assessment documents, professional development activities, comprehensive district improvement plan and walkthrough observation data
Interviews with district and school leadership, school council members, parents, certified instructional staff, classified staff and students
Observations of classrooms and eWalks

District leadership conducts learning walks in classrooms, but they do not always monitor to ensure that student performance standards are clearly communicated, visible in classrooms and observable in student work.

2.1h Samples of student work are analyzed to inform instruction, revise curriculum and pedagogy, and obtain information on student progress.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of district assessment documents, professional development activities, comprehensive district improvement plan and walkthrough observation data
Interviews with district and school leadership and certified instructional staff

District leadership provided all teachers with training in the scoring of writing portfolios, but not all teachers have received training in protocols for analyzing other student work. District leadership has not ensured that all teachers know they are expected to analyze student work to improve instruction and inform curriculum decisions. School leadership is charged with monitoring teacher practices to ensure student work is regularly analyzed to inform teaching and learning.

Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 2 **Classroom Evaluation/Assessment**

The school board policy on assessment should be reviewed, revised, implemented and regularly monitored. All school councils should have a policy to address authentic assessment that is rigorous, standards-based and administered on a regular basis. These policies should be reviewed, revised, implemented and regularly monitored.

District leadership should provide training for all principals and teachers on the characteristics of proficient work. Results of the training should lead teachers to collaboratively design and implement authentic assessments and rubrics. Rubrics should contain rigorous performance level descriptors that will guide students to produce proficient work. District leadership should ensure that opportunities to collaborate are provided to district and school staff. District leadership should monitor to ensure that all teachers are using this time to collaborate.

All teachers should be trained to score and analyze writing portfolios to effectively meet the writing requirements at all grade levels. School council assessment policy should include writing portfolio training for all teachers. Copies of the Portfolio Development Handbook and The Marker Papers K–8 or 9–12 should be provided for all teachers.

District leadership should train all teachers and school leadership in a protocol or procedure to assist in analyzing student work. This training should include, but not be limited to, writing portfolio scoring training. District leadership, in collaboration with school leadership, should monitor to ensure that student work and assessments are analyzed and the data is used to identify gaps, guide instruction, give feedback to students and to keep a record of student progress.

Resources:

Assessment Blueprint. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Administrative+Resources/Testing+and+Reporting + /CATS/Accountability+ System/Blueprint+for+Kentucky+Core+Content+Test.htm?IMAGE=Search

Marzano, R. J. (2000). Transforming Classroom Grading. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D. J. & Pollock, J. E. (2001). Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, Robert J., Debra Pickering and Jay McTighe, Assessing Student Outcomes, Performance Assessment Using the Dimensions of Learning Model, ASCD, 1993.

Portfolio Development Handbook. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). education.ky.gov/users/jwyatt/writing/KyWritingHandbook/Development%20Handbook%20All%20Grades/Development%20Handbook%20Appendices.pdf

SISI Toolkit Standard 2. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%202/Standard%202%20By%20Standards.htm

The Kentucky Marker Papers K-8 or 9-12.(Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/High+School/English+Language+Arts/Writing/The+Kentucky+Marker+Papers+P12.htm

Wiggins, G. (1998). Educative Assessment: Designing assessments to inform and improve student performance. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hardin County

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Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 3 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 7 indicators (88%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 1 indicator (13%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 3

3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of eWalk data and professional development offerings
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and certified instructional staff
- Observations of classrooms

District leadership intentionally recruits highly qualified and diverse certified personnel. The district supports certified instructional staff who want to participate in professional development outside the district or pursue National Board Certification. Hardin County Schools have the third highest number of National Board Certified Staff members in the state. A variety of professional development opportunities are offered by the district to update content knowledge and current professional practices. Monthly professional development sessions are conducted for all new teachers to target their unique needs.

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of lesson plans and school learning walk form
- Interviews with the superintendent, school board members, central office staff, school leadership, certified instructional staff, parents and students
- Observations of classrooms and student work displays

The district leadership has procedures for implementing a variety of research-based instructional strategies in all schools. Opportunities are provided for all staff to be trained in the implementation of Thoughtful Education, Literacy First and Robert Marzano's strategies for effective instruction. District leadership conducts learning walks in most classrooms using a checklist and provides some feedback to school principals. Principals are expected to monitor the consistent use of differentiated instructional strategies in classrooms to ensure all students are receiving instruction that is rigorous, relevant and focused on results. A fully functioning process has not been developed to ensure that principals are monitoring frequently and giving appropriate feedback to certified instructional staff. Very limited data is collected and analyzed to show the impact of specific instructional strategies on individual student progress.

3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state learning goals and assessment expectations for student learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of eWalk data, lesson plans, state and district curriculum documents
- Interviews with school board members, district leadership, school leadership, certified instructional staff, parents and students
- Observations of classrooms and displays of student work

The district leadership team meets monthly, sometimes bi-monthly, with school principals and the curriculum, instruction, assessment/gifted and talented teachers (CIA/GT) to provide resources and training that will assist in the alignment of instructional strategies and learning activities with student learning goals and assessment expectations. The schools are expected to align curriculum, assessment and academic expectations and have been given some tools for the process, but the degree of implementation and completion among the schools varies significantly. The curriculum, instruction and assessment support to schools is primarily the responsibility of the curriculum, instruction, assessment/gifted and talented teachers with some

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

assistance from the district directors. There is no monitoring to ensure that the assistance provided to schools from the district directors is frequent, regular and responsive to the unique needs of the students enrolled in the school.

3.1c Instructional strategies/activities are consistently monitored and aligned with the changing needs of a diverse student population to ensure various learning approaches and learning styles are addressed.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of eWalk data, lesson plans, school curriculum documents and walkthrough instrument
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and certified instructional staff
- Observations of classrooms

A team of district staff conducts learning walks using a checklist, but use of data from those classroom visits to assist all certified instructional staff in planning and modifying instructional strategies is inconsistent. The district staff provides some training in strategies to meet the diverse needs of students and principals are expected to ensure that all classroom instruction reflects the diverse learning styles of the students. Some schools are focused on that goal, but others do not have data to show they are assessing learning styles, regularly monitoring instructional practices and altering instructional strategies based on individual student needs. There is no systematic district procedure for monitoring the implementation and impact of instructional initiatives on individual student achievement in all subject areas and for all targeted student populations. District leadership does not ensure that all students with academic and behavior challenges have equal access to a challenging curriculum and rigorous instructional practices. Inclusion and collaboration occur in some schools; however, the effectiveness of these service delivery models is not being monitored to document impact on individual student achievement.

3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate the use of technology in their classrooms.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of state and district curriculum documents, board policies and procedures, school council policies, technology plans, lesson plans and professional development records
- Interviews with district and school leadership, certified instructional staff, parents and students
- Observations of classrooms and technology labs

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

District leadership provides a variety of technology resources to schools and offers training for staff to use these resources. There are district and school level technology plans and a school technology coordinator in every building. A district technology committee analyzes school technology plans and makes recommendations to the district technology coordinator for final decision making. The network is being updated to accommodate current needs in the district. Buildings under construction and renovation are updated to the latest available technology for improving student learning. The pace of hardware installation and infrastructure is not sufficient to meet the immediate needs of the schools. The district relies on school leadership to ensure certified instructional staff are using technology effectively for delivering instruction. The curriculum, instruction, assessment/gifted and talented (CIA/GT) teacher in each building is expected to assist teachers with integrating technology into instruction, but effective integration is not occurring in all buildings. District leadership provides some monitoring of technology use but does not ensure that all school councils develop and implement policies and procedures for evaluating the effective use of technology for increasing the rigor and relevance of classroom instruction. Technology is assigned based on formula or by request rather than by a systematic process that targets resources to meet the unique identified needs of student populations or schools.

3.1f Instructional resources (textbook, supplemental reading, technology) are sufficient to effectively deliver the curriculum.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of perception survey, instructional materials, curriculum documents, eWalk data and district budgets
- Interviews with district leadership, school board members, school leadership, certified instructional staff and parents
- Observations of classrooms

The district allocates instructional resources to schools to support student needs primarily by a formula. There are some grants through educational foundations, cooperatives and other sources to supplement existing programs or materials, but there has been no systematic process to provide for continuation of successful programs beyond the grant period. A new initiative being developed by the superintendent and committee of community leaders is intended to provide systematic and ongoing community support for the development and implementation of an effective instructional program. There is no clearly defined process to ensure all available resources are identified, connected to delivery of the curriculum and equitably distributed according to the needs specified in the individual comprehensive district and school

Summary Findings in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Performance Rating 2

improvement plans.

3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of eWalk data, professional development records, lesson plans and assessment samples
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership and certified instructional staff
- Observations of classrooms

The district expects school leadership to lead their staffs in the analysis of student work for the purpose of improving instructional practices, but limited time is provided for this process to occur. In some schools, leadership models, trains and monitors analysis of student work, but there is no district led initiative to provide the framework for this process. The district does not have procedures in place to collect feedback from certified instructional staff in all schools to determine their needs in order to begin analyzing individual student work.

3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent and monitored and tied to instructional practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of school board policies, perception survey results, lesson plans, classroom assessments, school council policies and student handbooks
- Interviews with the district leadership, school leadership, certified instructional staff, students and parents
- Observations of classrooms

The district expects that school leadership and certified instructional staff will establish homework procedures and most schools leave homework procedures up to the individual classroom certified instructional staff. The district leadership does not monitor school council policies to ensure that homework is developmentally appropriate and a meaningful extension of classroom learning.

Summary of recommendations in: **Academic Performance**

Standard 3 **Instruction**

Instructional practices should be aligned with curriculum and assessment. The district should lead regular and continuous monitoring of instructional practices in all classrooms to ensure effective and varied instructional strategies are used with all students. The process should include immediate and meaningful feedback to instructional staff so they may use it to refine instructional practices. The monitoring should be ongoing and data should be collected at regular intervals to measure impact of the instructional practices on individual student learning.

The district should monitor all classrooms for the use of rigorous, clearly articulated rubrics and performance standards, and for sustained improvement in strategies selected to deliver instruction in all classroom. Monitoring for successful implementation of instructional practices should be the continuous focus of the district. District leadership should continue to work with school leadership to provide time and staff to assist certified instructional staff in collaboratively analyzing student work to improve instructional practices.

Improving literacy and math skills for all students should be an ongoing focus, but should not exclude other areas of student learning. A writing plan should be developed that integrates writing opportunities in all classes, including electives. These writing experiences should be research-based and process-oriented. Certified instructional staff in every school should implement reading, math and writing activities that link across all disciplines. Certified instructional staff should provide classroom experiences that excite students and spark their enthusiasm for school attendance and life long learning through best practice instructional strategies that engage students.

District leadership should collaborate with school leadership to assist all instructional staff in the integration of the instructional technology resources that will have the greatest potential for immediately impacting student achievement. The district should monitor the training and the implementation of technology in all classrooms.

The district should develop a plan to monitor the implementation of the inclusive and collaborative models of instruction in all schools to ensure equity of access to the curriculum and instructional practices for all students. All teachers, including those with special certifications, should receive professional development that trains them to implement a least restrictive environment that challenges all students to learn at high levels. An adequate number of certified instructional staff and assistants, trained in this process, should be provided to assist schools in transitioning to this model of instruction. Intensive and job-embedded training should be provided to ensure the unique academic and behavioral needs of all students are met. Planned, frequent and regular communication between case managers, content area certified instructional staff, collaborative certified instructional staff and instructional

assistants should be a part of all district and school improvement efforts to meet the needs of all students.

Resources:

Barr, R. & Parrett, W.H. (2003). Saving our Students Saving our Schools. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Blankenstein, A., Cole, R.; & Houston, P.D. (2006). Engaging Every Learner. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

DuFour, R., DuFour, R, Eaker, R. & Many, T. (2006). Learning by Doing. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Silver, H., Strong, R.W. & Perini, M.J. (2000). So Each May Learn. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Zemelman, S., Daniels, H. & Hyde, A. (2005). Best Practice: New Standards for Teaching and Learning in America's Schools. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 4 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 11 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

4.1a There is leadership support for a safe, orderly and equitable learning environment (e.g., culture audits/school opinion surveys).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of board of education meeting agendas and minutes, comprehensive district improvement plan, safety plans and reports, accident and communication plan and board of education policies and procedures
- Interviews with board of education members, district and school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, communties members, parents and students
- Observations of classrooms, district facilities and alternative school

Board of education has adopted policies and procedures designed to provide students and staff with a safe and orderly learning environment. The district collects some survey data and occasionally conducts learning walks to evaluate the safety of the learning environment. District leadership does not systematically evaluate the learning environment in each school to ensure the equitable application of academic and behavioral standards or the implementation of safety procedures. Multiple exterior doors in school buildings are not secured, and in many schools, procedures to ensure that visitors are identified and screened are not in place. District monitors safety drills only through the submission of logs. There is no scheduled district presence on-site during drills to monitor effective implementation.

4.1b Leadership creates experiences that foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels in order to motivate staff to produce continuous improvement in student learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of board of education meeting agendas and minutes, comprehensive district and school improvement plans and district Web page
- Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, communties members, parents and students
- Observations of displays of student work

District leadership is developing a structure and process to engage community stakeholders in continuous improvement of student learning. District leadership expresses a belief that all children can learn at high levels

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

but does not directly support or facilitate that belief by holding all staff accountable. District leadership attempts to create a culture of high expectations, but proficiency is not defined and modeled in most cases. District leadership facilitates monthly district-wide focus groups to allow teachers to meet for the purpose of sharing ideas and successful instructional strategies. Some opportunities to celebrate school success are provided by district leadership (e.g., Fred Factor, board of education recognition, local television station, newspapers, and newsletters).

4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally and this is evidenced in their practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of board of education meeting agendas and minutes, board of education policies and procedures
- Interviews with board of education members, district and school leadership, school council members, communties members and school certified instructional staff

The district monitoring of school council development and implementation of academic, discipline and classroom management policies is limited to submission of policies to the district liaison. District leadership does not monitor to ensure that academic and behavioral standards are consistently communicated and equitably applied by all staff to all students. Students receive a district handbook that relates behavior expectations. District leadership attempts to promote a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations for all students in all schools, but the perception that equality always results in equity hinders this effort.

4.1d Teachers and non-teaching staff are involved in both formal and informal decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan
- Interviews with board of education members, district and school leadership, certified instructional staff and classified staff

District leadership does not always involve both teaching and non-teaching school staff in formal and informal decision-making processes. Parents, students and community members were included on a limited basis in the development of the comprehensive district improvement plan.

4.1e Teachers recognize and accept their professional role in student success and failure.

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of Kentucky Performance Report and comprehensive district and school improvement plans
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, classified staff, communties members, parents and students

District leadership expects all staff to recognize and accept their role in student success or failure; however, all staff do not communicate and demonstrate their acceptance of this role. Although district leadership provides some opportunities for teachers to reflect on the success and failure of their students to inform instruction, the process is not formalized or monitored.

4.1f The school intentionally assigns staff to maximize opportunities for ALL students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of local board policies, staff handbooks, school council policies and district plans and procedures
Interviews with district and school leadership, school council members, communties members and school certified instructional staff
Observations of classrooms and common areas

There is no district plan to guide principals in the selection and assignment of staff to ensure that identified student needs are met. The district does not ensure that all schools have a council policy to maintain effective student/teacher ratios. Student achievement data and personnel evaluations are not systematically used to assign staff for all students to achieve proficiency.

4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families about individual student progress (e.g., engage through conversation).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of student/parent/staff handbooks, perception surveys, culture surveys and local board policies and procedures
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, guidance counselors, communties members, parents and students
Observations of classroom and common areas

The district policy does not require that progress reports contain information other than the computer-generated statements. Individual schools vary widely with communication to families. Some schools have excellent communication procedures and practices to ensure positive relationships and

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

student success. Progress reports are most commonly standard reporting statements without specific student information or explanation.

4.1h There is evidence that the teachers and staff care about students and inspire their best efforts.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of local board meeting agendas and minutes, perception surveys, and culture surveys
Interviews with board of education members, district leadership, school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, communties members and classified staff
Observations of classrooms and common areas

District leadership conducts some surveys, but the response is often low. The contacts are generally made in English and are by mail or flyers. The district does not systematically use communication strategies that target families of underserved groups in order to reduce the barriers to learning. District leadership is working with school leadership to foster an emphasis on attitude and relationship building among members of the stakeholder community.

4.1i Multiple communication strategies and contexts are used for the dissemination of information to all stakeholders.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of local board communication plan, local board policies and procedures and district Web page
Interviews with board of education members, district leadership, school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, representatives of local government, chamber of commerce, members of civic organizations, social service agencies, members of ministerial association, communties members, parents and students
Observations of classrooms and common areas

There are many strategies being used and developed to communicate information with most stakeholders. Some of those methods such as television cable access reach a wide variety of stakeholders. There is considerable outreach to community partners from the district leadership to develop relationships and encourage participation in district education activities. Direct contact with parents and families from schools and district is made in the traditional methods such as newsletters and flyers and is not always effective with all parent groups. There is little follow-up or monitoring of those procedures by district leadership.

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

Performance Rating 2

4.1j There is evidence that student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated (e.g., displays of student work, assemblies).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of board of education meeting agendas and minutes, board of education policies, school council minutes, district Web page and newspapers
Interviews with local board, district and school leadership, school council members, school certified instructional staff, communties members and displays of student work
Observations of classrooms and common areas

Student, staff and volunteer recognitions are often scheduled during local board meetings and are published in newsletters, television and press releases. Individual schools are expected to submit information to the district staff when they desire recognition. The district leadership has recently begun to initiate a more comprehensive effort to build relationships with the community that will allow greater coverage of successes. Quality student work is displayed in some schools, and there is a growing district emphasis on recognizing and celebrating student success at all levels.

4.1k The school/district provides support for the physical, cultural, socio-economic, and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of board of education meeting agendas and minutes, comprehensive district and school improvement plans, district and school report cards, board of education policies and procedures and district Web page
Interviews with district leadership, school leadership, school council members, certified instructional staff, communties members, parents and students
Observations of classrooms and common areas

The district does not currently have a systematic plan in place to address individual needs of schools that have a disproportionate number of students with significant barriers to learning. District leadership uses a funding formula based on average daily attendance to allocate funds and resources to schools. Most section seven funds are allocated by project or request and are not specifically targeted to the reduction of the impact of physical, cultural or socioeconomic factors on learning and success. There is no formal process for special requests to be evaluated for their impact on improving student achievement. Some stakeholders report that district resources are not equitably distributed to schools with the greatest need. There is a variance in the distribution of resources and materials between and among schools.

Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 4 **School Culture**

The adopted district policy and procedures for providing students and staff an orderly learning environment should be consistently implemented in all schools. District leadership should work collaboratively with school leadership to clearly identify and address deficiencies and monitor implementation to ensure school safety (e.g., secure outside doors of all buildings). A more comprehensive visitor check-in procedure should be implemented. District leadership should monitor safety drills by periodic on-site observations during the drills.

District and school leadership should ensure consistent and equitable implementation of academic and behavior standards. Leadership should develop a process to maintain a continuous and intentional focus on what is best for students. Intellectual and cultural needs, as well as strategies to address multiple learning styles of a diverse population, should be analyzed in order to eliminate identified achievement gaps.

District and school leadership, staff and support personnel should articulate and model the belief that all students can achieve at high levels. Standards of high expectations should be written, verbalized, practiced and communicated to students and all stakeholders. Leadership and staff should accept their role in student academic success and failure and demonstrate and model their acceptance of this role. Training for all district personnel should include understanding diversity including targeted student populations.

District leadership should form a districtwide committee co-led by parents and educators with representatives from all stakeholder groups to begin an immediate focus on creative ideas to motivate families to participate in the activities of their childrens' educational program. This committee should review research on what works in communities with similar demographics and implement a variety of strategies that will help families trust and feel comfortable getting involved in school activities.

Resources:

Inside the Black Box of High Performing High Poverty Schools, Lexington, KY: Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

Payne, R. (1998). A Framework for Understanding Poverty. Highlands, TX: aha! Process, Inc.

The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle and Kentucky Family and Community Involvement Guide to Student Achievement. Kentucky Department of Education

website:
www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Student+and+family+Support/Parents+and+Families/The+Missing+Piece+of+the+Proficiency+Puzzle.htm

The Prichard Committee - www.prichardcommittee.org

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 5 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 5 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

5.1a Families and the community are active partners in the educational process and work together with the school district staff to promote programs and services for all students.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and dropout statistics
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, parents and certified instructional staff

District leadership has programs to involve stakeholders in the promotion of both district and school programs and services for all students. This includes things such as parent training and celebration training sessions, volunteer workshops, volunteer celebrations and parent meetings with the superintendent and other appropriate staff. The district has limited partnering with community and families to monitor dropout and transfer rates and has offered few options for reducing transfers within the district. District leadership has recently begun to involve community members, parents and school staff in working on issues facing the district.

5.1b Structures are in place to ensure that all students have access to all the curriculum (e.g., school guidance, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, Extended School Services).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of board of education policies, perception survey results, Kentucky Performance Report, comprehensive district improvement plan
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, counselors, Family Resource/Youth Services Center staff, parents and certified instructional staff

The board of education has adopted policy to ensure all students have equal access to the common academic core, but district leadership does not always implement procedures to ensure that this occurs. District leadership monitors but does not always specifically ensure that all students have access to all services (e.g., Family Resource/Youth Services Centers, Extended School Services, Title I, technology programs for small schools and special programs). Guidance services are available at all schools. District leadership ensures that programs funded from federal and state grants meet the

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Performance Rating 2

guidelines and regulations but does not ensure they effectively support student learning.

5.1c The school/district provides organizational structures and supports instructional practices to reduce barriers to learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, perception survey results, notes from Education Summit and Extended School Services coordinator's notebook
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, Family Resource/Youth Services Center staff, certified instructional staff and community members
Observations of classrooms

District leadership provides access to a variety of instructional materials and resources to engage students in active learning (e.g., technology upgrade, Thoughtful Education, science class laboratories, math manipulatives). Varied instructional strategies supporting active learning were observed in some elementary classrooms but in fewer classes at the middle and high school levels. District leadership offers trainings on the use of resources, but does not effectively monitor to determine the impact of the training on classroom practice. There is a policy and procedures in place for referring students for health and social services. A number of collaborative activities with the community exist at the district and school level. These include drives sponsored by local churches to collect clothing and food for distribution to families in need through the Family Resource/Youth Services Centers, the Books for Babies project and the Back Pack project. The superintendent has established a new partnership with the North Central Educational Foundation to promote and support elementary and secondary education in the district. This partnership sponsored a study of the level of services being provided by the school system and of future needs. The findings of this study were presented at a summit attended by 70 community and education leaders. Follow up action on the finding of the summit continues. District leadership does not consistently ensure that teachers understand the impact of cultural differences on learning. Student placement decisions are made at the school level. In many cases these are based on student performance rather than need. District procedures to identify students with learning problems do not always accurately reflect student need.

5.1d Students are provided with a variety of opportunities to receive additional assistance to support their learning, beyond the initial classroom instruction.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, comprehensive school

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

Performance Rating 2

improvement plans and Extended School Services coordinator's notebook
Interviews with superintendent, school board members, central office staff, principals, counselors, parents, certified instructional staff and community members
Observations of classrooms

A variety of services are available at the school level to support students who need additional assistance. The degree of coordination of these services by the district varies by program. The comprehensive district improvement plan includes a strategy to “reevaluate” the Extended School Services program to improve participation rates. The superintendent has made collaboration among programs, staff and other stakeholders a central focus for the district.

5.1e The school maintains an accurate student record system that provides timely information pertinent to the student's academic and educational development.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of Software Technology, Incorporated records and individual learning plans
Interviews with central office staff, principals and counselors
Observations of school records maintenance areas

District leadership implements policies and procedures for the maintenance, security and quality of the districts student record system. Individual student records can be accessed with appropriate security through Software Technology, Incorporated computer system. Individual schools maintain cumulative education folders containing educational profiles reflecting a variety of information about students. Most middle schools have developed individual learning plans for students.

Kentucky Department of Education

District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

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Summary of commendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

District leadership and community leaders have joined into an education summit for the Hardin County community. This initiative is an ongoing effort to determine the educational needs of the community and to develop educational programs that will maximize the quality of the workforce and that will enhance the quality of life for its citizens.

Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 5 **Student, Family and Community Support**

The district should establish processes to enable collaboration and coordination of Title I, Extended School Services, Family Resource/Youth Services Center and Special Education to eliminate gaps and avoid unnecessary duplication of services.

The district should provide appropriate professional development to ensure that all teachers understand the impact of cultural differences on learning.

The district should continue to follow up on recommendations and actions resulting from the education summit held earlier this year.

District leadership should work to intentionally establish student assistance teams within each school to serve as a means to reduce barriers to learning for individal students. This team should regularly communicate concerning not only the academic and behavior needs of students but also to coordinate school and community support services to address student and family needs.

Resources:

Barr, R. & Parrett, W. (2006). The Kids Left Behind. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Christenson, Sandra L. & Sheridan, Susan M. Schools and Families: Creating Essential Connections for Learning.

Southwest Educational Development Laborabory - Online Module for Family and Community Involvement. http://www.sedl.org/learning/

Hand in Hand: Parents, Schools, Communities for Kids. www.Handinhand.org

Marzano, R. (2003). What Works in Schools. Alexandra, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Lexington, KY - www.prichardcommittee.org

Promising Practices for Family Involvement in Schools (Family, School Community Partnership Issue, Vol. 1)

SISI Toolkit Standard 5. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%205/Standard%205%20By%20Standards.htm

Kentucky Department of Education

District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

School District

10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 6 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 9 indicators (75%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 3 indicators (25%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 3

6.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined evaluation process.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of evaluation process documents, communication of evaluation process within 30 days and individual growth plans
Interviews with principal and certified staff members

The board of education has adopted a personnel evaluation policy that meets state standards and is implemented by district and school leadership.

6.2d Leadership provides and implements a process of personnel evaluation which meets or exceeds standards set in statute and regulation.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of personnel evaluation process documets and individual growth plans
Interviews with principal and certified instructional staff

District leadership supports school leadership by providing technical assistance in the implementation of the district's personnel evaluation system. The district's certified personnel evaluation process that is approved by the Kentucky Department of Education meets all requirements of state statute and regulation and is implemented by school leadership. District and school leadership implements a certified personnel evaluation system that includes observation and feedback.

6.2e The school/district improvement plan identifies specific instructional leadership needs, has strategies to address them, and uses the effective instructional leadership act requirements as a resource to accomplish these goals.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive school improvement plans and individual growth plans
Interviews with district and school leadership

The comprehensive district improvement plan has specific instructional leadership needs identified. District and school leadership needs are also addressed in individual growth plans. The Effective Instructional Leadership Act is used as a resource to complete professional development requirements

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District Review Summary Report

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Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 3

by school leadership.

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

6.1a There is evidence of support for the long-term professional growth needs of the individual staff members. This includes both instructional and leadership growth.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of district curriculum documents, professional development activities, comprehensive district improvement plan, individual growth plans and budget allocations for professional development
- Interviews with district and school leadership, certified instructional staff and classified staff

District leadership views professional development as essential to the school and district change process. Professional development activities are included in the comprehensive district improvement plan; however, neither the district nor the schools have an intentional long-term plan for professional growth of all certified and classified staff. There is no structured monitoring system in place ensuring the extent to which these activities and experiences impact student learning.

6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity through on-going professional development.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of professional development activities, district improvement plan and individual growth plans
- Interviews with district and school leadership and certified instructional staff

Comprehensive district and school improvement plans include professional development activities intended to build competence in instructional staff. There is some meaningful collaboration between district and school leadership to plan effective professional development (e.g., Thoughtful Education and Literacy First). A survey was conducted to determine professional development needs in individual schools, but there was minimal response. District leadership has not developed a comprehensive process for monitoring the impact of professional development on student learning.

6.1c Staff development priorities are set in alignment with goals for student performance and the individual professional growth plans of staff.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district curriculum documents and individual growth plans
- Interviews with district and school leadership, certified instructional staff and classified staff

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

The professional development plans for the superintendent and district staff members are not intentionally aligned with the district's goals for student performance and the individual growth plans of staff. School leadership is expected to ensure professional development meets the needs identified in the individual growth plans but there is seldom district monitoring.

6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning and the priorities set for the school and district staff development activities.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and comprehensive school improvement plans and professional development activities
- Interviews with district and school leadership, certified instructional staff and classified staff

District leadership sometimes engages in collaboration with school leadership to monitor professional development activities in district and school improvement plans. District and school professional development activities are not always connected to student learning goals. At the request of district leadership, professional development is focused on relationship-building and instruction. Monitoring and evaluating to determine effectiveness of professional development on staff and student performance are lacking.

6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of district and school improvement plans, professional development activities and individual growth plans
- Interviews with district and school leadership, certified instructional staff and classified staff

Some district leadership and staff professional development activities are ongoing or job-embedded.

6.1f Professional development planning shows a direct connection to an analysis of student achievement data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, student analysis data summaries and reports and professional development activities
- Interviews with district and school leadership, certified instructional staff

District leadership reviews all professional development activities at both the school and district level. District leadership does not always ensure that all professional development plans have a direct connection to student

Summary Findings in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

Performance Rating 2

achievement data, especially data related to student populations with achievement gaps. District leadership provides limited assistance to school leadership in revising professional development plans.

6.2b Leadership provides the fiscal resources for the appropriate professional growth and development of certified staff based on identified needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive school improvement plan and individual growth plans
- Interviews with principal and certified instructional staff

The local board of education has adopted a professional development policy and ensures the equitable allocation of professional development funds for all schools. A variety of funding sources are used to support professional development. District leadership does not consistently monitor the expenditure of funds for impact on identified needs of students.

6.2c The school/district effectively uses the employee evaluation and the individual professional growth plan to improve staff proficiency.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive school improvement plan evaluation forms, individual growth plans and learning walk observation form
- Interviews with principal and certified staff members

District leadership expects all individual growth plans to be developed collaboratively with the appropriate evaluator to address identified areas of growth and to be annually reviewed and updated. Monitoring to ensure this expectation is carried out is not done systematically.

6.2f Leadership uses the evaluation process to provide teachers with the follow-up and support to change behavior and instructional practice.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive school improvement plan, professional development activities, certified personnel evaluation instrument, sample of teacher evaluations and individual growth plans
- Interviews with principal and certified instructional staff

District leadership does not always intentionally monitor formative evaluations. District leadership does not always ensure that principals support teachers in initiatives designed to improve teacher performance or promote use of best practices. The implementation of professional growth plans is not consistently monitored to ensure changes in teacher behavior and practice.

Summary of recommendations in: **Learning Environment**

Standard 6 **Professional Growth, Development, and Evaluation**

District leadership should consistently and intentionally monitor the professional development and evaluation processes. Professional development offerings should be linked to analysis of student data and its relationship to student achievement. Evaluation should be linked to successful implementation of the skills learned in professional development.

District leadership should continue the learning walks and provide feedback to principals. Principals should then use this information to provide individual and group feedback to enhance classroom instruction and to develop individual growth plans.

Research based professional development should be ongoing and embedded in classroom instructional practices.

District leadership should sponsor and financially support opportunities between and among for administrators and teachers to share "what works" with colleagues.

Resources:

Danielson, Charlotte and Thomas L. McGreal, Teacher Evaluation to Enhance Professional Practice, Association for Suprvision and Curriculum Development.

Guskey, T. R. (1999). Evaluating Professional Development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Professional Development Resources. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://education.ky.gov/KDE/Administrative+Resources/Professional+Development/

Results-Based Staff Development. National Staff Development Council. http://www.nsdc.org/connect/projects/resultsbased.cfm

SISI Toolkit Standard 6. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%206/Standard%206%20By%20Standards.htm

Hardin County

School District

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 7 there was 1 indicator (9%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 8 indicators (73%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 2 indicators (18%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 3

7.1c There is evidence that all administrators have a growth plan focused on the development of effective leadership skills.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of individual administrator growth plans and principal self-study documents
Interviews with the superintendent, central office staff and principals

The individual growth plans of administrators focus on effective leadership skills (e.g., coaching strategies, learning walks, etc.) to support teaching and learning and student achievement. The plans are developed in collaboration with the evaluator and address district and school improvement plan initiatives as well as identified individual growth needs. Growth plans of administrators are implemented, reviewed regularly and revised as needed.

7.1k There is evidence that the principal demonstrates leadership skills in the areas of academic performance, learning environment and efficiency.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of principal individual growth plans and the self assessment instrument
Interviews with the superintendent, board members, central office staff and principals

The superintendent holds all principals accountable for student achievement. She uses principal evaluation protocol and professional growth plans to specifically address leadership skills in academic performance, school culture and efficiency to promote student achievement. She uses a self-assessment instrument and a learning walk process to help principals to assess their skills and progress in leading their teachers to instructional excellence. The self-assessment and resultant interaction with the superintendent serves as the basis for much of their professional growth plans. She and appropriate members of her staff coach her principals in skills necessary to accomplish this goal. She monitors the process through frequent visits to the classrooms of all schools, giving appropriate feedback to principals on what she observes. She holds principals accountable for using classroom visits to improve instruction.

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

7.1a Leadership has developed and sustained a shared vision.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of Vision for Success brochure and posted vision and mission statements
Interviews with the superintendent, board members, central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff
Observations of district and school common areas

The district vision and mission statements had not been reviewed or revised for a number of years and were determined not to be driving or informing the work of the district. The superintendent, with input from various community and district stakeholder groups, wrote an interim set of statements to provide immediate direction to the work of the district until a more comprehensive, formal and collaborative process can be implemented.

7.1b Leadership decisions are focused on student academic performance and are data-driven and collaborative.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Interviews with the superintendent, board members, principals and school council members

The board of education receives annual academic progress reports from the leadership of each school and sometimes uses that information to inform decision making. District leadership regularly provides current educational data on student achievement to the board. District leadership sometimes confers with school leadership before making decisions that impact school work.

7.1d There is evidence that the school/district leadership team disaggregates data for use in meeting the needs of a diverse population, communicates the information to school staff and incorporates the data systematically into school's plan.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Interviews with the superintendent, board members, central office staff, principals school council members and certified instructional staff

District leadership engages in the collection and analysis of disaggregated data and compares the academic achievement of student populations, but this information is not effectively used to inform decision making.

7.1e Leadership ensures all instructional staff have access to curriculum related materials and the training necessary to use curriculum and data resources

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

relating to the learning goals for Kentucky public schools.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of Kentucky curriculum documents and professional development activities
Interviews with the superintendent, central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

District leadership provides district and school staffs with access to some of Kentucky's current curriculum documents, other curriculum related materials and data resources that relate to and support the learning goals for Kentucky schools. Programs and strategies to support the achievement of these goals (Thoughtful Education, Marzano, Rutherford, Measures of Academic Progress, Descartes Continuum, etc.) are made available to staff. District leadership provides limited training on the use of Kentucky's most current curriculum documents.

7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected and allocated to focus on curricular and instructional issues.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of school council policies and district communications
Interviews with the superintendent, central office staff, principals, certified instructional staff and students
Observations of classrooms

District leadership engages school leadership and staffs in promoting the importance of protecting instructional time. The superintendent has repeatedly communicated that message and her expectations regarding the effective use of instructional time to all staff, both in person and in written communications. Additionally, she observes how instructional time is used in her learning walks during building visits and communicates her observations to the building principal and other appropriate staff. There is, however, still considerable wasted instructional time in the classrooms of many buildings. District leadership does not address the issue of school council policies regarding the protection of instructional time.

7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources, monitors progress, provides the organizational infrastructure, and removes barriers in order to sustain continuous school improvement.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of district and school budgets and allocations
Interviews with the superintendent, board members, central office staff, principals, certified instructional staff, parents and students

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

Allocation of district resources to schools is sufficient to achieve required learning goals. Allocations are made by formula and are not intentionally structured to provide for the unique learning needs of each school, particularly schools struggling to meet state and federal goals. Monitoring of the impact of the resources on student achievement is informal and not systematic or sustained. Efforts are made by district leadership to ensure that district initiatives support school initiatives and do not create barriers to school improvement.

7.1h The school/district leadership provides the organizational policy and resource infrastructure necessary for the implementation and maintenance of a safe and effective learning environment.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of board and school council policies, district and school safety plans and logs of safety drills
- Interviews with the superintendent, central office staff, school council members, principals, certified instructional staff and students

The board of education develops policy and district leadership implements procedures to ensure that each school has the necessary resources to support a safe, healthy, orderly and equitable learning environment for students and staff. The district requires each school to have a safety plan to guide school staff in responding to events that endanger the safety or the physical or emotional well-being of teachers or students. The district monitors school safety procedures by submission of logs of drills and safety plans and by periodic visits of school facilities to identify and address safety concerns. There is no district presence at school safety drills to ensure that the drills are effective or to support improvement in implementation.

7.1i Leadership provides a process for the development and the implementation of council policy based on anticipated needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

- Review of school council policies submitted to central office
- Interviews with the superintendent, central office staff, school council members and principals

District leadership ensures that all required policies and by-laws are in place in all schools but does not actively encourage best practice policies that assist in the optimization of school council activities. The implementation of policies is not monitored. Guidance and support of school council activity is primarily technical assistance in response to requests rather than a proactive effort to maximize council effectiveness.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 2

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School District

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

Performance Rating 1

7.1j There is evidence that the SBDM council has an intentional focus on student academic performance.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Interviews with the superintendent, board members, central office members, school council members and principals

District leadership does not attend school council activities and meetings except to make presentations or in response to requests.

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Summary of commendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

The superintendent has implemented a comprehensive system of coaching her principals in the skills necessary for them to be effective instructional leaders. This initiative includes learning walks by the superintendent followed by feedback sessions with the principals with the intent that the principals will use this information to work with teachers to improve instructional practice. The superintendent has committed to conducting a learning walk in at least one school every day. She monitors the work of the principals on a regular basis to ensure that they are effectively focusing on improvement of instruction in their building.

Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 7 **Leadership**

The superintendent should lead the board of education and central office staff in the development and implementation of a systematic and comprehensive process to ensure that necessary district resources are effectively targeted to support schools that have high numbers of at-risk students and are struggling to meet federal, state and local goals. The process should include ongoing monitoring of the impact of those resources on student achievement and a process to guide necessary revisions.

District support for school based decision making councils should expand beyond technical assistance toward a proactive program targeted to the development of a school and district partnership to increase and sustain high achievement for all students. This partnership should be marked by collaborative effort, a high level of mutual trust, clear two-way communication and a common vision and goals. This initiative should be tightly focused to the goal of developing council leadership capacity.

A team of school council liaisons under the direction of a district coordinator should work directly with assigned councils, attend meetings of the council serving as a resource and provide feedback to district leadership about what services should be provided to councils. The staff members assigned to develop and implement this program should have clear job expectations that are tightly aligned to the development of school council capacity.

The superintendent should lead the board of education and central office staff in the development and implementation of a clear set of job descriptions for district leadership personnel that will directly support the achievement of district goals. Integral to these job descriptions should be clear lines of responsibility and the necessary authority to fulfill them. These responsibilities and authority should be clearly communicated to all district and school staff. All necessary training and coaching should be provided to ensure that staff members can carry out their job responsibilities through coordinated efforts using common language and interventions. Incumbent to this process is the development and implementation of a clear and efficient system of communication to support the work.

The superintendent should lead the central office staff in the development and implementation of a comprehensive and systematic monitoring process for all district programs. This will allow district and school staff to determine the impact of programs and their requisite allocations of resources on the achievement of instructional and organizational goals and, ultimately, on the achievement of all students. This monitoring system should be based on commonly understood and clearly communicated measures and should include supervisory input as well as that from the level at which implementation occurs. The process should evaluate the effectiveness of programs at both the design and implementation levels in order to

allow district and school leadership to determine where and how program adjustments should be made and whether or not programs should be continued.

Resources:

DuFour, R., DuFour, R. & Eaker, R. (2004). Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service. ISBN 1932127283

Lewis, C. P. (1996). Building a Shared Vision: A Leader's Guide to Aligning the Organization (Corporate Leadership). University Park, IL: Productivity Press.

Norton, M. S. & Kelly, L. K. (1997). Resource Allocation: Managing Money and People. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Preuss, P. G. (2003). School Leader's Guide to Root Cause Analysis. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

SISI Toolkit Standard 7. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%207/Standard%207%20By%20Standards.htm

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 8 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 10 indicators (100%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 2

8.1a There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district budget, board policies, Kentucky Performance Report and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress report
- Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff and parents

District leadership does not effectively monitor the use of school resources for impact on the learning needs of all students and instructional needs of staff. Organization of the school and the structure of programs are mainly the responsibility of the school council and school leadership team with some input from district leadership.

8.1b The master class schedule reflects all students have access to all the curriculum.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, master schedules and board policies
- Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff, parents and students

District leadership expects school leadership to ensure sufficient core content courses are available to all students. School leadership is responsible for the development of the school master schedule. Staffing allocations to schools meet state requirements.

8.1c The instructional and non-instructional staff are allocated and organized based upon the learning needs of all students.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district budget, staff allocations and board policies
- Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff and parents

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

District leadership does not systematically monitor and analyze the impact of school staff assignments on student achievement. District leadership expects each school to allocate and organize staff to address the unique learning needs of all students. The district provides staffing according to the district staffing formula policy. Schools may request additional staff to address specific needs above and beyond the allocated staff.

8.1d There is evidence that the staff makes efficient use of instructional time to maximize student learning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff, parents and students

District leadership expects each school to monitor classroom management practices, school organizational structure and the master schedule to support the efficient use of instructional class time but provides no assistance to the school leadership to ensure that this occurs.

8.1e Staff promotes team planning vertically and horizontally across content areas and grade configurations that is focused on the goals, objectives and strategies in the improvement plan (e.g., common planning time for content area teachers; emphasis on learning time and not seat time; and integrated units).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan and board policies
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff and parents

District leadership reinforces a team approach to plan the most appropriate methods of delivering instruction at each school. Common planning time that addresses instructional strategies and content integration is encouraged by district leadership but is not being implemented at all schools. Transition activities between schools are limited.

8.1f The schedule is intentionally aligned with the school's mission and designed to ensure that all staff provide quality instructional time (e.g., flex time, organization based on developmental needs of students, interdisciplinary units, etc.).

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, master schedules and mission

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

and vision statements
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff, parents and students

There is no meaningful district level involvement in the design of the school master schedules. District leadership encourages school leadership to design school schedules that maximize instructional time to promote high student achievement but does not assist or support the school in that process.

8.2a The school/district provides a clearly defined process (in accordance with the school council allocation formula) to provide equitable and consistent use of fiscal resources.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district budget and board policy
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff and parents

The district allocates funds to the schools based upon average daily attendance rather than on unique student instructional needs. Additional allocations are available when requested by school councils and approved by district leadership. School budgets are monitored through the purchase order and district approved accounting practices.

8.2b The school/district budget reflects decisions made about discretionary funds and resources are directed by an assessment of need or a required plan, all of which consider appropriate data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district budget and board policies
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff and parents

District leadership monitors the allocation of discretionary funds but does not use a process that focuses on identified student needs in each school. The budget process does not intentionally focus on schools that are struggling to meet state and federal goals.

8.2c School councils and school boards analyze funding and other resource requests to ensure the requests are tied to the school's plan and identified priority needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district budget and board

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

Performance Rating 2

policies
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff and parents

The board of education does not have a formal process in place to require district leadership to explain or justify the relationship between the proposed budget and the impact it should have on improving student performance. There are no intentionally designed policies or procedures to address additional funding for schools struggling to meet state or federal goals. School board minutes do not reflect that the school board members engage in in-depth discussions and questions about the improvement plans and budgets.

8.2d State and Federal Program Resources are allocated and integrated (Safe Schools, Title 1, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, Extended School Services) to address student needs identified by the school/district.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district improvement plan, district budget and board policies
Interviews with central office staff, principals, counselors, school council members, certified instructional staff and parents

School councils have minimal input into the allocation of categorical funding but do have input into expenditures of these funds at the school level. Categorical funds are monitored by district program directors according to state and federal guidelines. Categorical funds are effectively integrated to increase resources available to carry out the objectives of the comprehensive school improvement plans. District program coordinators do not have a formal plan in place with which to monitor and evaluate the impact of these resources on student achievement. Some funds are integrated in an effort to maximize impact on student achievement.

Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 8 **School Organization and Fiscal Resources**

District leadership should develop a systematic and comprehensive process to monitor and evaluate the use of all resources for their impact upon student achievement.

District and school leadership should work collaboratively to ensure that instructional practice becomes the focus of planning time, resulting in higher student achievement. Structures, schedules and staff assignments should be reviewed at least annually to ensure that rigorous and relevant curriculum and instruction for every student are supported by the school organization.

District leadership should assist school leadership in evaluating the effective use of time, fiscal and human resources with an intentional focus on how these resources can be used to positively impact student achievement, especially for targeted student populations as identified in the comprehensive district improvement plan.

District and school leadership should collect and analyze data to ensure that categorical funds are having the expected impact on student achievement.

The superintendent should request from the Kentucky Department of Education management review and special education monitoring to assist with the provision of a free and appropriate public education and with the development of a system to target resources and monitor their use.

RESOURCES:

Kentucky School Board Association - www.ksba.org

Lifting Low-Performing Schools. (Spring, 2002). Journal of National Staff Development Council.

Marzano, Robert J., Waters, Timothy & McNulty, Brian A. (2005). School Leadership That Works: From Research To Results. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Norton, M., Scott, N.M. & Kelly, L.K. (1997). Resource Allocation: Managing Money and People. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Plecki, M.L. & Monk, D.H. (2003). School Finance & Teacher Quality: Exploring the Connections. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Power Sources: Creative ways to make time, find money, and motivate people. (Summer, 2003). (theme) The Journal of the National Staff Development Council.

SISI Toolkit Standard 8. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%208/Standard%208%20By%20Standards.htm

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Based on interviews conducted by the District Review Team members and their inspections of pertinent documents and materials, it was concluded that in Standard 9 there were 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 1," 12 indicators (75%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 2," 4 indicators (25%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 3," 0 indicators (0%) evaluated as "Evaluation Category 4." A brief description of the evaluation of the indicators follows.

Performance Rating 3

9.2b The school/district uses data for school improvement planning.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact checks, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Annual Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

The Standards and Indicators for School Improvement as well as implementation and impact reports, principal reports, information from instructional services department meetings and Kentucky Core Content Test data analysis sessions at school and district levels are part of the school and district needs assessment process. The needs are used to set goals, determine priorities and action steps.

9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research and current local, state and national expectations for student learning and are viewed by the planning team.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Annual Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

The comprehensive district improvement plan reflects the latest educational research in the strategies/activities developed (e.g., Silver and Strong's Thoughtful Education, Webb's Depth of Knowledge, Conversation, Help, Activity, Movement, Participation, Success [CHAMPs], Effective Schools Network). District and state standards are used in determining goals and objectives.

9.3b The school/district analyzes their students' unique learning needs.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, district and

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 3

school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

Populations not reaching proficiency are identified during data disaggregation. The data is used to set goals and develop action steps for these populations.

9.4a Perceived strengths and limitations of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are identified using the collected data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, perception surveys, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress report
Interviews with central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

District and school leadership conduct walkthroughs to observe the implementation of instructional activities. Perception surveys, teacher lesson plans, formative and summative evaluations and Measures of Academic Progress data are also collected. Data collected is sufficient to determine existing strengths and limitations in the instructional and organizational effectiveness of the district.

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

9.1a There is evidence that a collaborative process was used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission and goals that engage the school community as a community of learners.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, summer retreat agenda and Vision for Success brochure
- Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals and certified instructional staff

The district mission statement was adopted in May 2000 and has been annually reviewed and adopted without revision. The superintendent has developed interim vision, mission, beliefs and goals statements with input from a select group that included community members. The statements were shared with administrative staff at the summer retreat. A formal collaborative process for designing and adopting statements has not occurred but is planned.

9.2a There is evidence the school/district planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Kentucky Performance Reports, No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports, data analysis forms and Implementation and Impact checks
- Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

District leadership collects school and district data from the Kentucky Core Content Test, No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress and Measures of Academic Progress assessments on which to base goals, priorities and action steps. Classroom assessments and analysis of student work are not consistently used by the district in the planning process.

9.3c The desired results for student learning are defined.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
- Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
- Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

Goals for student achievement are clearly stated and measurable but are not accompanied by benchmarks to allow interim measures of progress.

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

9.4b The school/district goals for building and strengthening the capacity of the school/district instructional and organizational effectiveness are defined.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

District leadership has implemented strategies/activities to improve student achievement. Some of the goals for instructional and organizational effectiveness of the schools are clear, concise and measurable. District leadership provides some assistance to school leadership in building capacity for planning.

9.5a The action steps for school improvement are aligned with the school improvement goals and objectives.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

Action components focus on the closing of gaps in the populations (e.g., students with disabilities, African American students and students receiving free/reduced lunch). Alignment of goals and activities with school action components is not intentional. Activities in the comprehensive district improvement plan are based on research.

9.5b The plan identifies the resources, timelines, and persons responsible for carrying out each activity.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

Timelines of the comprehensive district improvement plan are not designed to have immediate impact on student performance. Most dates of completion of activities are May 2007. Resources for implementing and supporting strategies/activities are sufficient. Persons responsible for implementation of the strategies/activities are specified. The district is in the process of revising

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

and reviewing the plan.

9.5c The means for evaluating the effectiveness of the improvement plan are established.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, school board meeting minutes and agendas, school council reports to board, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with school board member, superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

The district has a systematic strategy (implementation and impact checks) to evaluate the effectiveness of the comprehensive improvement plan, but the process is not effectively implemented. In 2007, school councils began round table discussions with the school board and district personnel at open meetings. Talking points include what data is used, what is being done differently, what is making a positive impact on student learning, how continuous improvement is measured, what areas are still concerns and the plan to address these concerns. Discussion with the board did not necessarily encompass the comprehensive school improvement plan.

9.5d The improvement plan is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results for student learning and analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Vision for Success brochure, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

Many action components in the current plan use strategies that are research based. The comprehensive district improvement plan is not intentionally aligned with the district mission statement.

9.6a The plan is implemented as developed.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council

Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

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Performance Rating 2

members and certified instructional staff

District personnel provide training to the curriculum, instruction, assessment/gifted and talented teachers (CIA/GT). These teachers share this training at their assigned schools with follow up from district personnel. However, this training does not always result in the effective implementation of the comprehensive district improvement plan. Some district staff know the goals of the comprehensive district improvement plan.

9.6b The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning set by the plan.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

District leadership and school personnel use Measures of Academic Progress to measure student progress but not always to determine if students are achieving at a rate that will reach the goals of the comprehensive district improvement plan. They use data from the Kentucky Performance Report, No Child Left Behind Annual Yearly Progress reports and Measures of Academic Progress yearly to determine if goals of the district plan are met. Some schools use data from other sources (e.g., ThinkLink Learning, STAR Math and Reading, Scholastic Reading Inventory, learning checks).

9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact on classroom practice and student performance specified in the plan.

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:
Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, Implementation and Impact Checks, district and school report cards, Kentucky Performance Reports and No Child Left Behind Adequate Yearly Progress reports
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

District and school leadership conduct learning walks but limited data is compiled to determine the impact of the comprehensive district improvement plan has on classroom practices and student learning.

9.6d There is evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement.

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Summary Findings in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

Performance Rating 2

Finding For This Indicator is Based On:

Review of comprehensive district and school improvement plans, board of education meeting agendas and minutes and Implementation and Impact Checks
Interviews with superintendent, central office staff, principals, school council members and certified instructional staff

District leadership reviews data annually to determine if goals are met. Modifications to the plan are made as needed and approved by the board of education.

Summary of recommendations in: **Efficiency**

Standard 9 **Comprehensive and Effective Planning**

District leadership should ensure that all district personnel and school staff are aware of district goals and the contents of the comprehensive district improvement plan. They should provide support and direction for the implementation of both the comprehensive district and school improvement plans.

The board and district personnel should develop a plan for monitoring the effectiveness of the comprehensive district improvement plan and its action components. This should include input from all stakeholders and use of benchmarked results for student learning.

District leadership should collaborate with school leadership to prioritize goals and objectives of the comprehensive district and school improvement plans, focus on key issues related to student achievement and monitor progress throughout the school year. Data should be collected on the use of strategies and activities and their impact on student learning.

District leadership should set up a systematic process to regularly review and revise comprehensive district and school improvement plans to ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning across the district.

District leadership should define expected impacts in terms of measurable progress goals. Continuous assessment at these progress points should be conducted so that a review and modifications of the comprehensive district improvement plan can be clearly connected to changes in student performance and classroom practices. The frequent modifications of the comprehensive district and school improvement plans should drive decision making in the budgeting process and professional development needs.

Resources:

Comprehensive School Improvement Plan Data Analysis. Standards and Indicators for School Improvement Toolkit. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40604). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%209/PowerPoints/CP%20DATA%20ANALYSIS.ppt

Comprehensive School and District Improvement Planning. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Administrative+Resources/School+Improvement/Comprehensive+Improvement+Planning/

DuFour, R. & Eaker, R.E. (1998). Professional Learning Communities At Work, Best

Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Kentucky Association of School Councils - http://www.kasc.net/

Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence - www.prichardcommittee.org

Prioritizing Changes. SISI Toolkit Standard 9. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%209/Documents/Prioritizing%20Changes.doc

Sample I & I Monitoring Checklist, SISI Toolkit, Standard 9. (Available from the Kentucky Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601). http://www.education.ky.gov/SISI_Toolkit/Standard%209/Documents/Sample%20I%20&%20I%20Monitoring%20Checklist.doc

Schmoker, M. (2006). Results Now: The Key to Continuous School Improvement. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Summary of Next Steps:

The superintendent should lead the central office staff in the development and implementation of a comprehensive and systematic monitoring process for all district programs. This will allow district and school staff to determine the impact of programs and their requisite allocations of resources on the achievement of instructional and organizational goals and on the achievement of all students. This monitoring system should be based on commonly understood and clearly communicated measures and should include supervisory input as well as that from the level at which implementation occurs. The process should evaluate the effectiveness of programs at both the design and implementation levels in order to allow district and school leadership to determine where and how program adjustments should be made and whether or not programs should be continued.

District leadership should ensure all teachers receive professional development to train them to work collaboratively to implement least restrictive environments, challenge all students to learn at high levels, emphasize intellectual, cultural and behavioral needs of students and address multiple learning styles of targeted student populations.

A curriculum document that is rigorous, intentional and aligned should become a road map to guide development of units and lesson plans and to identify what students should know and be able to do. The effective use of the document should be monitored regularly using analysis of individual student work to determine mastery of student learning.

Instructional practices should be tightly aligned with curriculum and assessment. The district should lead regular and continuous monitoring of instructional practices in all classrooms to ensure that they are rigorous, differentiated and proven to advance student learning and that they are supported by the resources necessary to sustain them.

The superintendent should lead the board of education and central office staff in the development and implementation of a systematic and comprehensive process to ensure that necessary district resources are effectively targeted to support schools that have high numbers of at-risk students and are struggling to meet federal, state and local goals. The process should include ongoing monitoring of the impact of those resources on student achievement and a process to guide necessary revisions.

District support for school councils should expand beyond technical assistance toward a proactive program targeted to the development of a school and district partnership to increase and sustain high achievement for all students. A team of school council liaisons under the direction of a coordinator should work directly with assigned councils, attend meetings of the council to serve as a resource and provide feedback to district leadership about what services should be provided to councils. The district support for school councils should be focused on the development of council leadership capacity.

In Conclusion:

The district scholastic review team wishes to express our most sincere appreciation to the Hardin County school community for the hospitality extended to us during our visit to the district. We appreciate the candor with which personnel responded to our inquiries and the kindness with which we were received at the various schools. It is our hope that the findings and recommendations contained in our report will be received with the same sense of seriousness as was expressed by stakeholders during our visit. In order that our scholastic review report positively impact student achievement in Hardin County schools, we further recommend that the report be shared among district and school personnel and that employers and employees of the district come together in a spirit of collegiality to consider the implementation of our recommendations. To provide an impetus for implementing our recommendations, we suggest that the Hardin County school district staff consider the following questions:

How can the district leadership use the results of this district scholastic review to lead the district schools to proficiency?

How can the leadership team effectively monitor all programs to ensure continuous student learning at high levels?

How can the leadership team be creative in finding increased time for all teachers to meet regularly to examine student work and plan collaboratively for the purpose of increasing student performance?

How can we create a school culture with success for all students at the center of all school efforts and a "no excuse" attitude among all staff?

What steps must we take to ensure all students have access to a rigorous, challenging curriculum that motivates them to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens?

What would the district look like if each person believed that all students could perform at proficient levels and accepted the responsibility for the success or failure of each and every student?

The district scholastic review team suggests that in asking these questions the district will be better able to pinpoint causes. The district leadership will be able to select the right strategies to solve the unique challenges that it faces in bringing about whole district improvement. The district will be able to ensure that no child is left behind.

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District Review Summary Report

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1.1 Curriculum **Academic Performance**

1.1a Curriculum is aligned. Academic Expectations, Core Content for Assessment, Transformations

1.1b District initiates, facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards

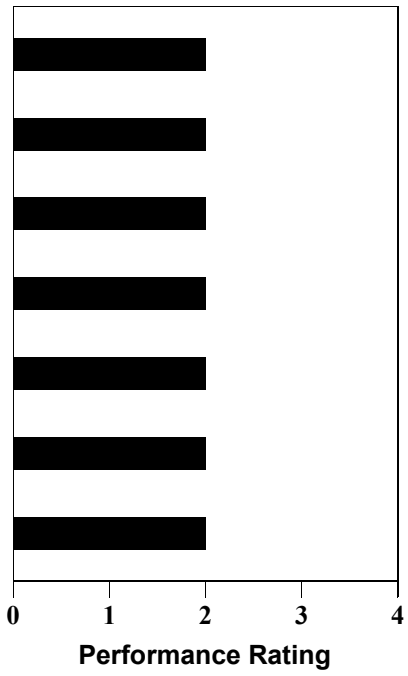
1.1c District initiates, facilitates discussions to eliminate unnecessary overlaps

1.1d Evidence of vertical communication, intentional focus on key curriculum transition points

1.1e School curriculum provides specific links to continuing education

1.1f Systematic process for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing curriculum

1.1g Curriculum provides access to a common academic core



District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

School District

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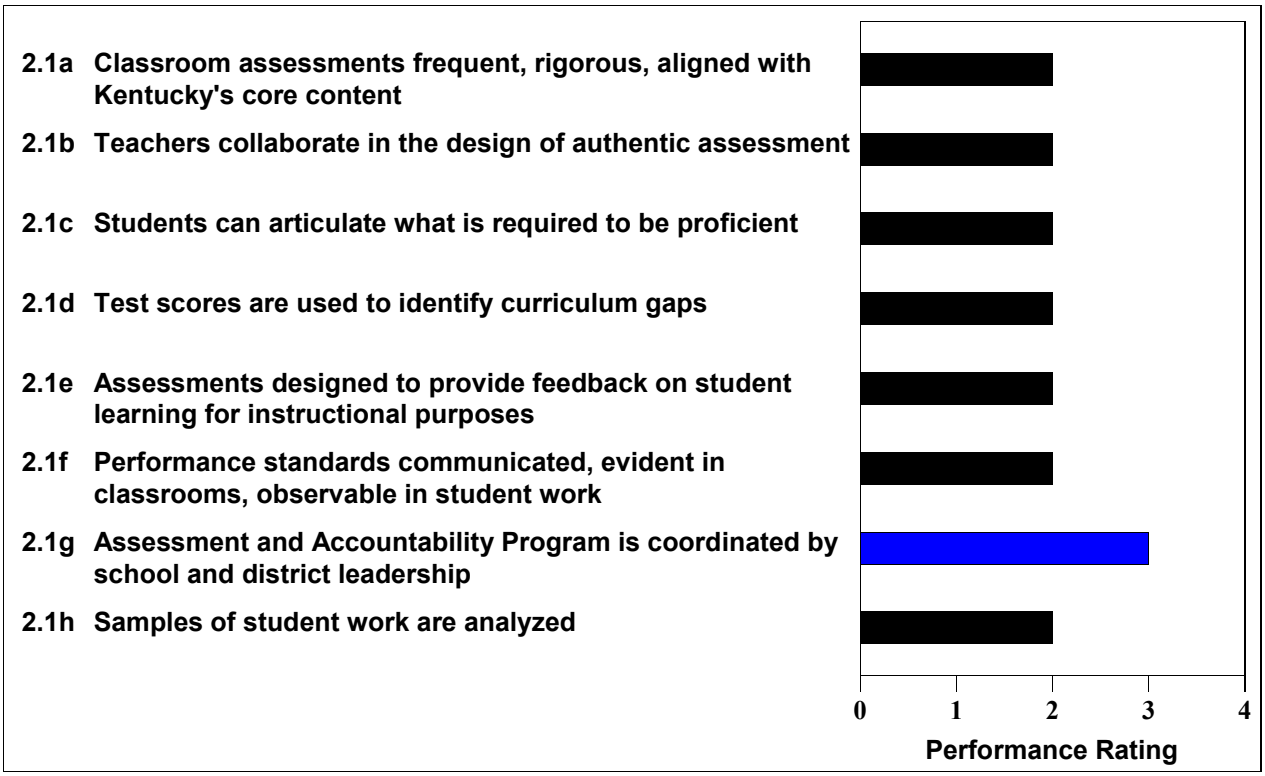
2.1 Classroom Evaluation/Assessment **Academic Performance**



Kentucky Department of Education

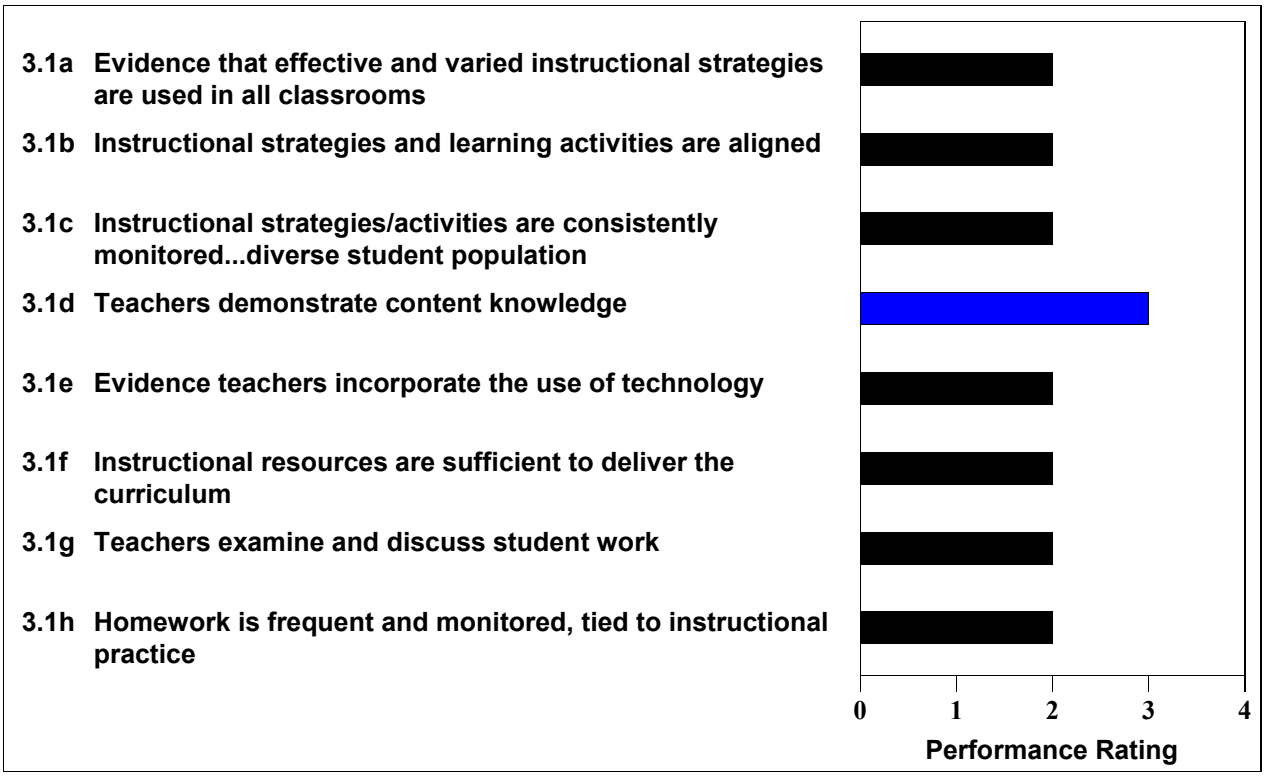
District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

School District

10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

3.1 Instruction **Academic Performance**



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District Review Summary Report

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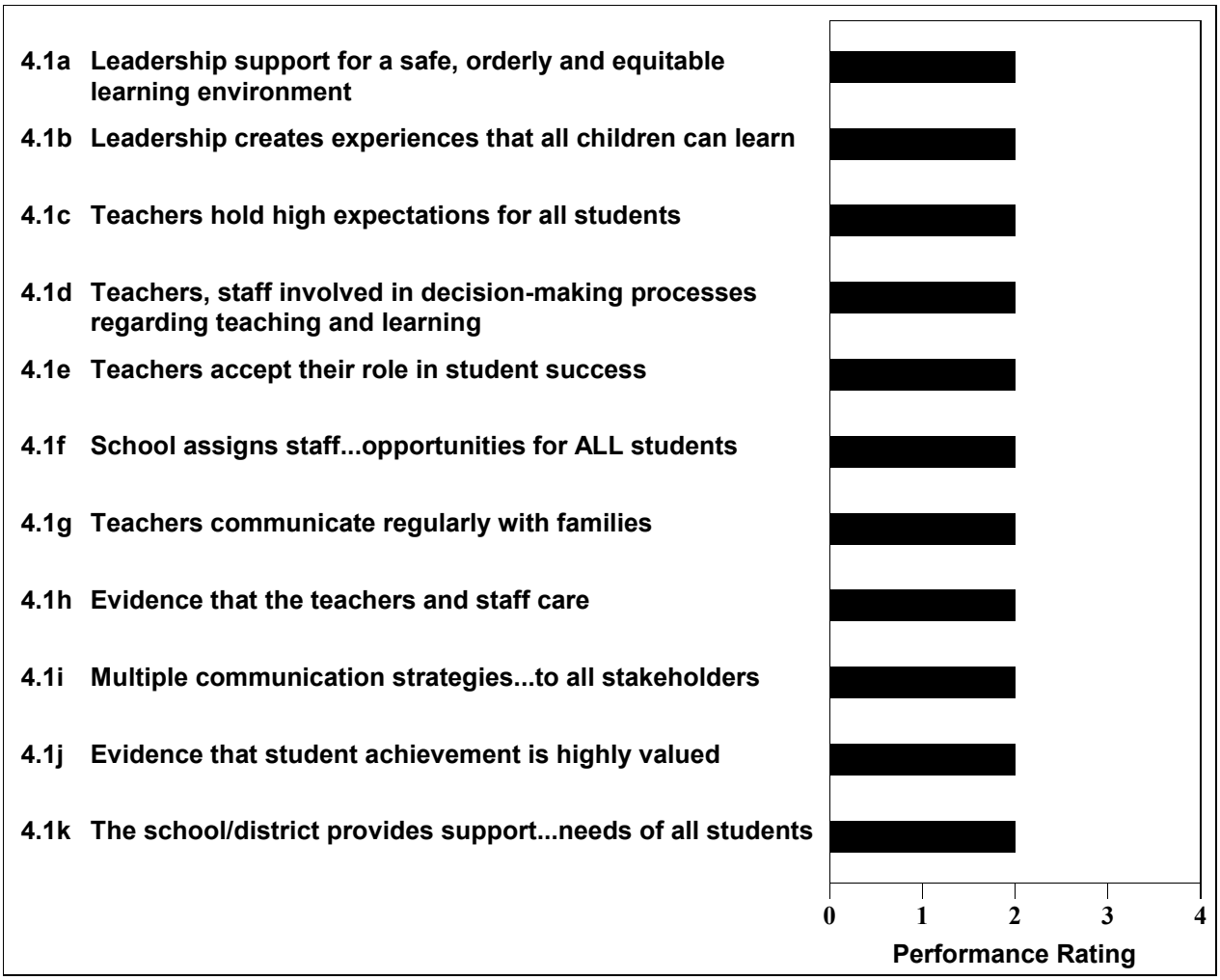
4.1 School Culture **Learning Environment**



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District Review Summary Report

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5.1 Student, Family and Community Support **Learning Environment**

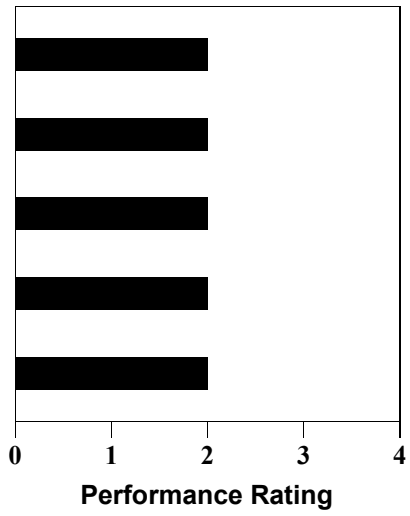
5.1a Families and the community are active partners

5.1b All students have access to all the curriculum

5.1c Reduce barriers to learning

5.1d Students are provided opportunities to receive additional assistance

5.1e School maintains an accurate student record system



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District Review Summary Report

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6.1 Professional Development **Learning Environment**

6.1a Support for the long-term professional growth of the individual staff members

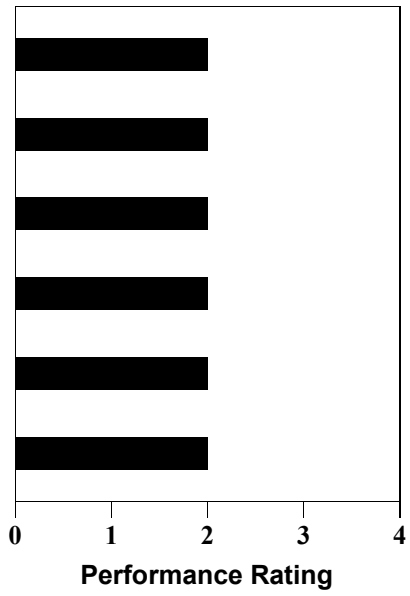
6.1b The school has an intentional plan for building instructional capacity

6.1c Staff development priorities..alignment..goals for student performance

6.1d Plans for school improvement directly connect goals for student learning

6.1e Professional development is on-going and job-embedded

6.1f Professional development planning connect student achievement data



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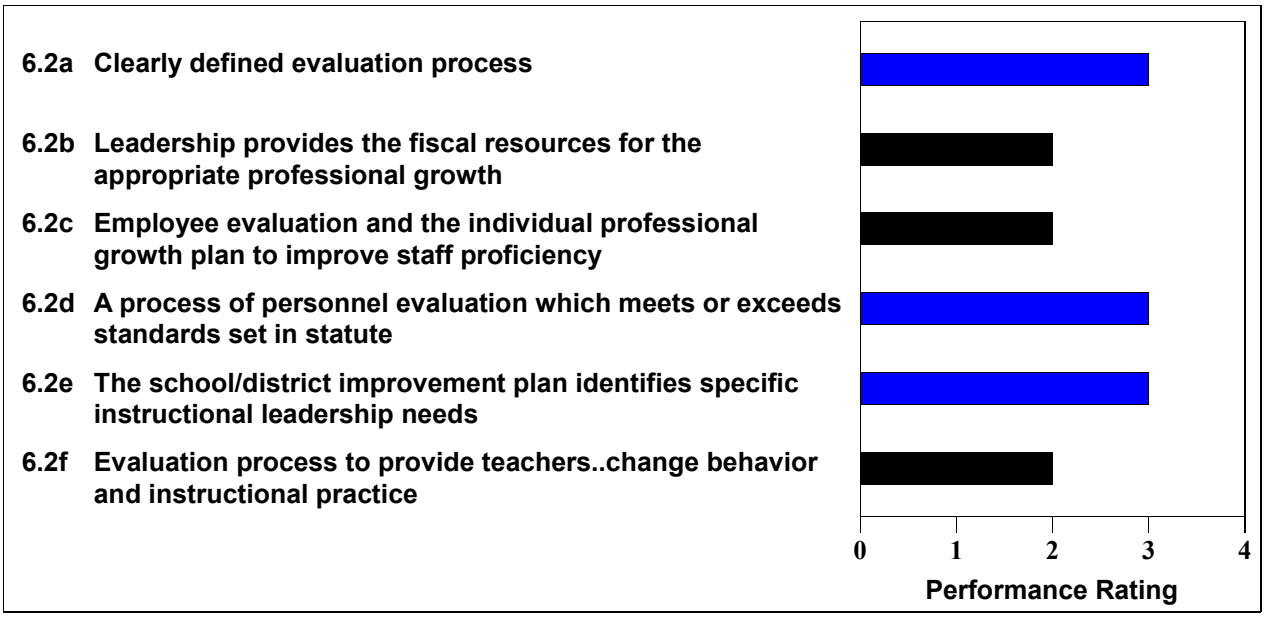
6.2 Professional Growth and Evaluation **Learning Environment**



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District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

School District

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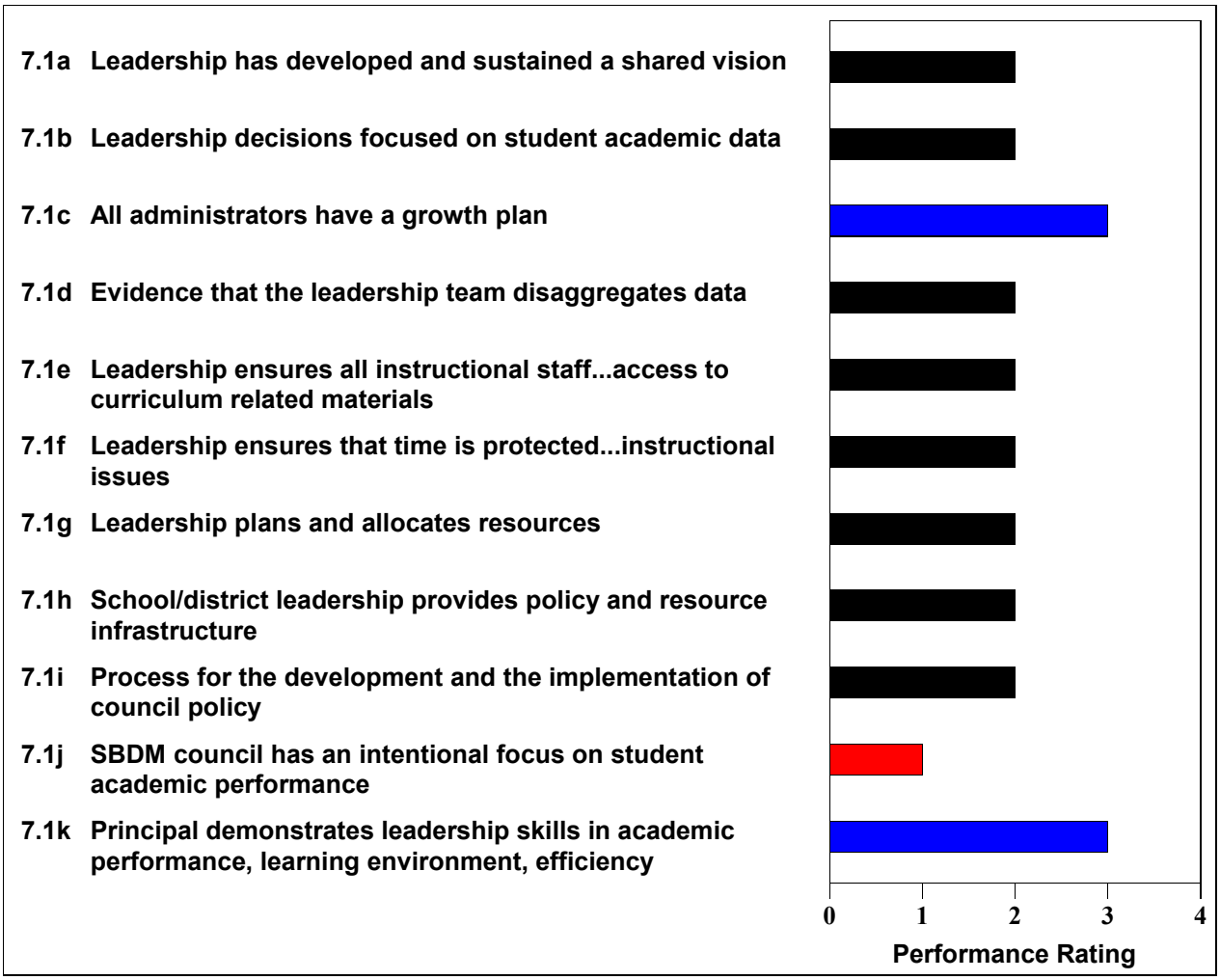
7.1 Leadership **Efficiency**



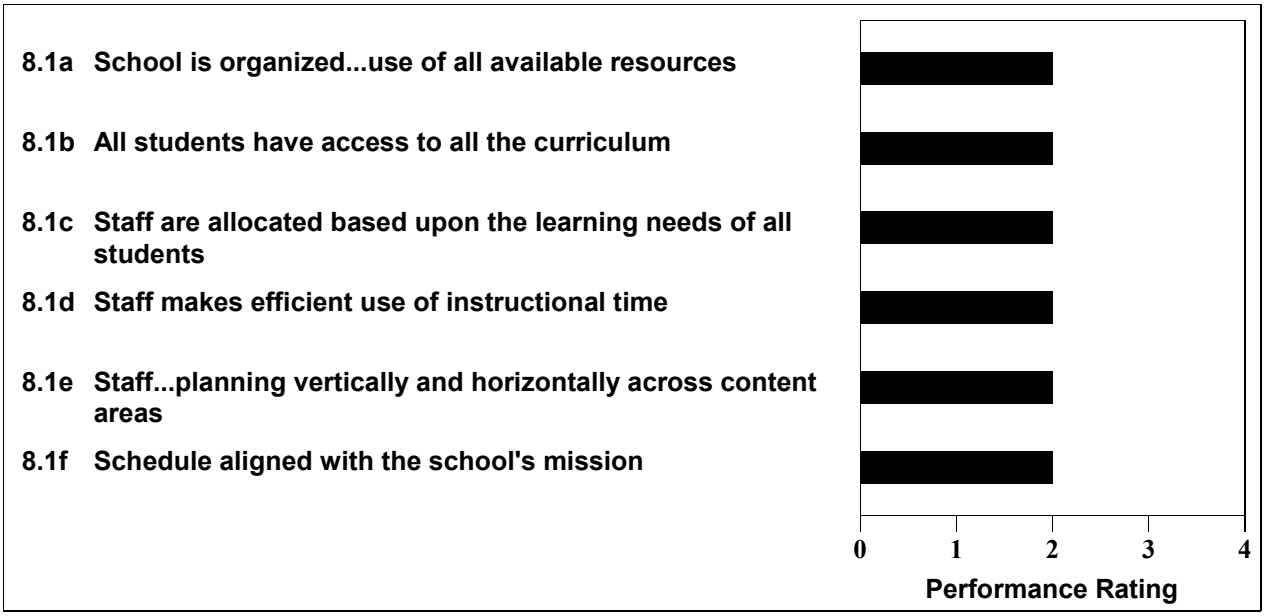
District Review Summary Report

Hardin County

School District

10/21/2007 - 10/26/2007

8.1 Organization of the School **Efficiency**



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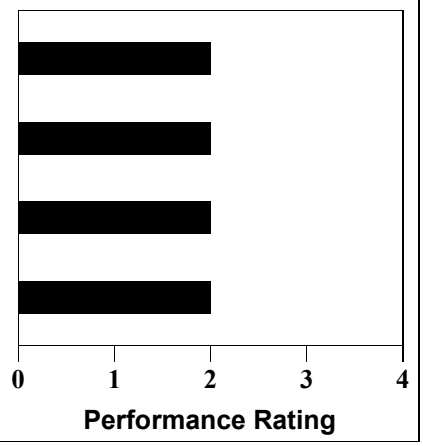
8.2 Resource Allocation and Integration **Efficiency**

8.2a Clearly defined process (in accordance with the school council allocation formula)

8.2b Budget reflects decisions directed by an assessment of need

8.2c Councils, school boards analyze funding and other resource requests

8.2d Resources are allocated and integrated to address student needs



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District Review Summary Report

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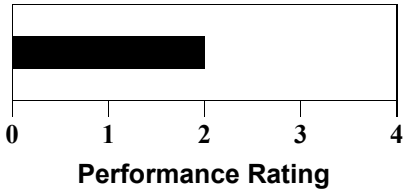
9.1 Defining the School Vision, Mission, Beliefs **Efficiency**

9.1a Collaborative process used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission



Hardin County

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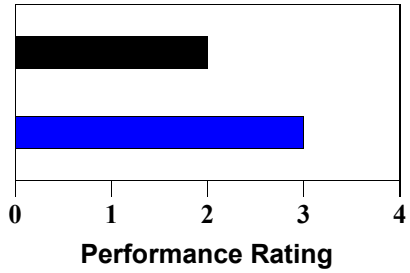
9.2 Development of the Profile **Efficiency**

9.2a Planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data

9.2b Use data for school improvement planning



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District Review Summary Report

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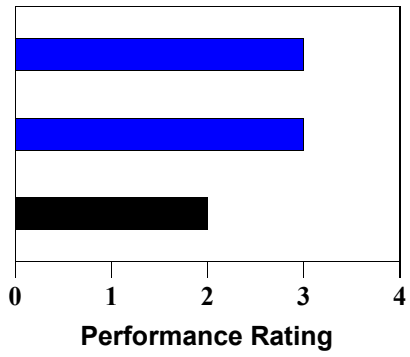
9.3 Defining Desired Results for Student Learning **Efficiency**

9.3a School and district plans reflect learning research, expectations for student learning

9.3b Analyze their students' unique learning needs

9.3c Results for student learning are defined



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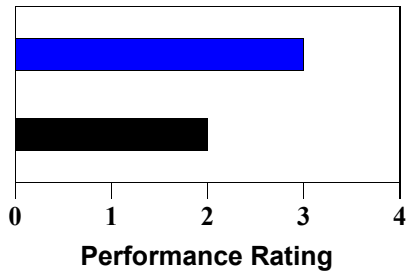
9.4 Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness **Efficiency**

9.4a Strengths and limitations are identified

9.4b Goals for building, strengthening capacity



District Review Summary Report

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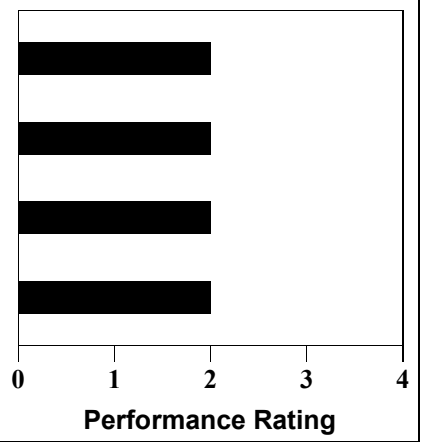
9.5 Development of the Improvement Plan **Efficiency**

9.5a Steps for school improvement aligned with improvement goals

9.5b Plan identifies resources, timelines

9.5c Evaluating the effectiveness of improvement plan

9.5d Improvement plan is aligned with the school's profile, beliefs, mission, desired results



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School District

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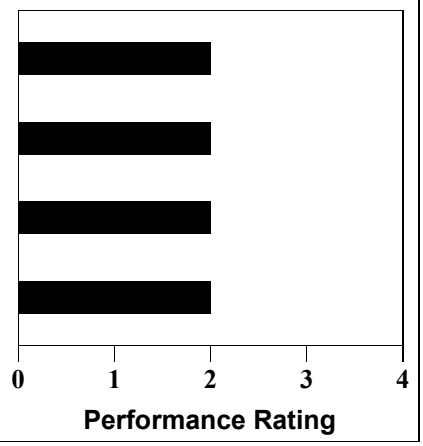
9.6 Implementation and Documentation **Efficiency**

9.6a Plan is implemented as developed

9.6b School evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning

9.6c The school evaluates the degree to which it achieves the expected impact

9.6d Evidence of attempts to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement