

## **Executive Summary: Fleming County Management Audit**

On December 4, 2013, the Kentucky Board of Education voted to enter Fleming County into state assistance so as to address academic concerns and financial strain on the district.

Pursuant to 703 KAR 3:205(2)(2), the comprehensive audit conducted March 12-15, 2017 included an investigation of the district's compliance with state and federal statutes and administrative regulations and local board policies. The comprehensive audit included an on-site review, investigation, and analysis of the governance and administration of the school district.

### **Key Findings:**

- Stakeholder interview data and information in the superintendent's overview highlighted a formative quality review process that the district used to monitor, evaluate and communicate information specific to student learning, district/school effectiveness and the attainment of system and school improvement goals. The locally-developed process embedded the AdvancED Standards of Quality and integrated clear quality assurance metrics to monitor and evaluate growth and improvement across the district. Through this process, Fleming County Schools had established a district-wide culture that supported change as evidenced by the district's unity or purpose, a collective focus on student learning, an openness to sharing, trust and respect among stakeholders as well as a supportive and knowledgeable administrative team. Moreover, data gathered from this process was communicated and shared with stakeholders through multiple delivery methods and routinely presented to the Board of Education during open public meetings.
- The district had developed a common vision and mission, which led to a shared message, language, and purpose. This vision was clearly focused on increasing student achievement, communicated and reinforced the system's values, and helped the district sustain a climate conducive to student learning. Fleming County Schools viewed its role as uniting with family and community to provide an equitable, high quality education that provides opportunities for each student to achieve success in a safe and caring learning environment. Interviews with staff members, administrators, community members, parents and students revealed their vision in terms of success for all students, high expectations and successful life transitions.
- Evidence suggested the district demonstrated a significant amount of organizational effectiveness. District leadership provided strong stewardship in the management and use of resources. Instructional time was protected and used effectively. Material and fiscal resources were focused on supporting educational programs and system operations. District and school leaders sought all reasonable options to secure the resources necessary to provide a challenging and equitable learning environment to all students. Available resources were used to improve the effectiveness of district operations and student performance.
- Student performance data, as detailed in the attachments of this report, suggested the district had not formally established a mechanism by which programs were uniformly monitored and evaluated to determine the impact on student success or determine verifiable improvement in student learning.
- Stakeholder interview data revealed the district had implemented instructional policy to support teaching and learning across the system; however, teachers and administrators were inconsistent in defining or explaining a specific, district-wide framework or instructional process that informed students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Furthermore, interviews revealed the use of explicit instruction as a framework for instructional process had not been adopted and/or implemented systemically or systemically across the district.

### **Recommendations:**

- Develop and implement a program evaluation process for internal stakeholders to monitor program effectiveness, district-wide initiatives and student learning. Ensure the process includes, but is not limited to, monitoring implementation fidelity and clearly documenting and analyzing the results of existing systems. Use this process to identify gaps, prioritize and connect all systems across the district.
- Engage all staff members in a collaborative process to develop, implement, monitor and document a district-wide instructional process. Use research-based instructional practices that 1) are responsive to individual student needs and encourage students to demonstrate ownership for their learning, 2) engage students in rigorous and challenging learning experiences, 3) clearly inform students of learning expectations and standards of performance and 4) provide students exemplars of high quality work and specific and timely feedback about their learning. Hold teachers accountable for the deliberate planning and use of instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection and critical thinking skills, as well as provide differentiated instruction, frequent checks for understanding, opportunities for re-teaching and the effective integration of technology to support academic achievement.
- Systematically and continuously use data to identify and coordinate learning support systems to address the unique learning needs, educational achievement and career planning of all students. Devote continued attention to the trends and patterns of learning and achievement by the various accountability subgroups within the system so that instructional and assessment practices, curriculum development and professional development emphasizes differentiation and personalized learning experiences for all students.