



2023-2024 Phase One: Executive Summary for  
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2023-2024 Phase One: Executive Summary for Districts

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## 2023-2024 Phase One: Executive Summary for Districts

### Description of the District

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

Garrard County Schools is a rural school system in central Kentucky comprising three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. According to the official GarrardCounty.us site, Garrard County is home to more than 16,900 residents and is centrally located in Kentucky just south of Lexington. Garrard County hosts several important historical sites including Camp Dick Robinson and the Governor William Owsley Home, along with great recreational opportunities at Herrington Lake and the Palisades.

Lancaster is the primary community in the heart of Garrard County. Smaller surrounding Garrard communities are Paint Lick, Cartersville, Buckeye, and Bryantsville. Garrard County is an agricultural community, striving to become work-ready certified. The economy of Garrard County is improving through an increase in small business investments, hospitality, private health care services, clean energy, and the Kentucky Bourbon industry. The local government, public services, and small business community's willingness to partner and support the students, staff, and school system is a key component for Garrard County School's improvement efforts.

The Garrard County School District serves about 2,500 students in Pre-K through 12th grade. Garrard County District offices, Garrard Education Center, Garrard Middle School, Lancaster Elementary, and Garrard County High School are located in the City of Lancaster. Paint Lick Elementary is located in the village of Paint Lick. Camp Dick Robinson Elementary is located in the village of Bryantsville. Garrard County Schools is the host district for the Area Technology Center, providing career and technical education for three neighboring school districts. The Garrard County Board of Education has approved the construction of Athletic and Co-Curricular Facilities at Garrard County High School that began in 2023 and be completed in 2024.

The faculty and staff reflect the demographics of the Garrard County community. The majority of the student and staff population are white students, 87%, with smaller percentages of Hispanic or Latino 6%, and African American students, 2%. 66% percent of all students are identified as economically disadvantaged, English Learning 2.6%, and Students with Disabilities 17%.

In 2020 Mr. Kevin Stull was appointed as Superintendent of Garrard County Schools. Paint Lick Elementary and Garrard Middle School selected new head principals in 2022. In 2023 Camp Dick Robinson and Lancaster Elementary welcomed the newest head principals to GCS. The Board of Education has expanded Garrard County School's support services, instructional leadership, and operational management

with the approval of an additional Director of Teaching and Learning, a Director of Public Relations and Communication, and two MTSS Coordinators.

### District Stakeholders

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

In order to ensure comprehensive and meaningful improvement, Garrard County Schools is committed to fostering active engagement and collaboration among all stakeholders, including civic leaders, district administrators, principals, teachers, parents, and students.

The process begins with transparent communication, wherein leaders actively seek input from these diverse voices. District and school leaders establish advisory committees comprising representatives from each stakeholder group, ensuring their ongoing involvement in the decision-making process. Through these interactions, GCS personnel facilitate open dialogue, encouraging stakeholders to share their thoughts, concerns, and innovative ideas.

Furthermore, efforts include organizing workshops and training sessions to empower parents, students, and community members, enhancing their understanding of the improvement initiatives and enabling them to actively participate. Regular progress updates and transparent reporting expectations are in place, ensuring that stakeholders are informed about the impact of their contributions.

By valuing the perspectives of all stakeholders and integrating their insights into improvement plans, Garrard County Schools creates a collaborative environment where every voice is heard, leading to the comprehensive advancement of the district's educational system

### District's Purpose

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

The mission of the Garrard County School District is simply students first. Garrard County Schools will empower students to be lifelong learners and to become productive members of a global society.

Garrard County School's vision is to provide gifted, committed staff so that all students are capable, confident, and graduate high school ready for college & careers, and life, prepared to pursue the future of their choosing.

Garrard County School leaders, faculty, and staff believe it is their collective responsibility to build relationships that ensure student success, to equip each student with the skills to become productive members of society and connect home and community to elevate achievement. The Garrard Learning Community will foster collaborative learning that challenges and celebrates the unique genius in all students, create a culture that values hard work, teaches perseverance, and positive attitudes, and ensures that each student thrives.

Garrard County School's' commitment to students, parents, and the community will always put students first, provide the highest quality of instruction, value and respect one another, embrace changes as opportunities for growth, and pursue excellence in all aspects of school life.

As outlined in our mission, the leaders and faculty of Garrard County Schools are dedicated to fostering opportunities for students to shape their own futures. School-to-career pathways are being accomplished or in development at Garrard County High School through unique agreements with BCTC, the University of Kentucky, Campbellsville University, and Eastern Kentucky University. Finally, Garrard Middle School is one of only a few Jobs for American Graduates offered to middle school students in the state of Kentucky.

Many of our partnerships are exclusive to our students. Our agreement with UK Healthcare Jumpstart Nursing Program was the first of its kind. Today, GCS remains one of just a few in the state of Kentucky for high school students to earn college credits in school, guarantee placement into the school of nursing, and full-time employment at UK Healthcare upon graduation. The BCTC articulation agreement for Area Technology Center students guarantees course credits to all students upon entering the school.

### Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

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

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding has been instrumental in the effort to reduce the pandemic's impact on student achievement and learning loss. Instructional technology and technology for learning were expanded to include 1 to 1 devices for all learners, wifi installed on buses and located throughout the community, and interactive flat panels installed for classroom presentation. These emergency technology initiatives have resulted in nearly eliminating the technology gap for Garrard County students and families.

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Superintendent Stull and the Board of Education have appropriated resources to improve the equity of learning by introducing a curriculum adoption cycle to address student and teacher access to high-quality instructional resources, ensuring Garrard County Schools implements a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Further supporting this process, GCS leadership elected to participate in the High-Quality Instructional Resources Pilot program offered through the Kentucky Department of Education for English Language Arts material adoption. Currently, each elementary school student, teacher, and learning community is benefiting from this focused alignment to Kentucky Academic Standards, researched-based, engaging tests, and rigorous assessments.

Garrard County Schools has made intentional and substantial financial commitments to improve the quality of professional learning and leadership development. Through the annual comprehensive needs assessment process, GCS resolved to elevate teaching and develop the collective capacity of all members of the learning community. In alignment with our commitment to continuous improvement, GCS leaders and teachers launched the 2023-2024 school year with a strategic approach to strengthen professional development. Themed Grow, Commit, and Succeed, staff members participated in a two-day teaching and learning summit followed by four collaborative days dedicated to a comprehensive curriculum and assessment development. Current efforts to address the developing teacher shortage issues begin with the GCHS grow-your-own teacher apprenticeship program.

Professional Learning Community principles have been emphasized to improve district and school-level leadership to improve the monitoring of initiatives, instruction, and progress monitoring at the students' level. The PLC model is a key improvement structure to facilitate a universal approach to the development of the district's comprehensive assessment system, alignment, and development of the local curriculum for each content, and adaptation of professional learning needs.

Garrard County Schools has established teacher leaders in each content area at every level to foster a collaborative culture of support, use research to improve practices, promote continuous improvement, and improve communication for building leaders. New Teacher Academy participants benefit from mentor support, monthly training, and quality guidance from district or building leaders.

Finally, Garrard County Schools has been awarded state funding to engage with the Deeper Learning Initiative. One teacher from each school, two district-level teachers, and the Directors of Teaching and Learning will lead the three-year initiative to explore the types of instruction to make deeper learning possible. These leaders will provide professional development and model this initiative for their colleagues in their respective schools.

#### Additional Information

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

Garrard County Schools have been identified as TSI (Targeted Support and Improvement) in the area of disability for two schools. To address this area at each school district leadership, school leadership, and teacher leadership are adapting and developing strategies for student and school improvement. Surveys, observations, and collaborative planning are utilized to inform the district's Needs Assessment. Co-teaching strategies, implementation, and monitoring will be offered as professional learning for all general education and special education teachers.

# Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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