



2023-2024 Phase One: Executive Summary for
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Hardin County Schools
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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?

Hardin County Schools is a strong district comprised of a talented and diverse student body, award-winning and magnificent staff, extremely supportive parents, and a community that invests its time, talent, and treasure into it each day. Hardin County Schools consists of 23 schools (3 High Schools, 1 Early College & Career Center, 5 Middle Schools, 13 Elementary Schools, and 1 Alternative School, as well as other alternative settings) and is currently the 5th largest district in the state, serving a diverse population of both suburban and rural populations. Our staff is dedicated to the success of our 14,788 students in grades preschool through 12. The district employs 1,113 certified employees and 1,100 classified employees. The Early College & Career Center has provided opportunities for students to expand their knowledge and skillset for transitioning to the real world. The district continues to look for ways to create opportunities for students to accelerate learning as well as provide opportunities for students to be prepared for life, whether that is college or career-oriented.

District Stakeholders

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

The superintendent has advisory groups for Certified, Classified, and Students to seek their input on decisions that are made. Currently, as a district we are developing our Portrait of a Learner and have sought out a variety of stakeholders in the community to help HCS develop the expectations of all students. Stakeholders include parents, clergy, business owners, teachers, and students. Work is also done with local universities (Grow Your Own), and cooperatives (Green River Regional Educational Cooperative). For our Federal Programs Grant Applications we also used information from the KARE (Kindness and Respect for Everyone) Committee

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.

Hardin County School's Vision Statement: Schools, Parents, and Community actively involved in "Helping Children Succeed". Hardin County School's Mission Statement: The mission of the Hardin County Schools, in partnership with the family and community is to prepare students to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a global society.

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.

The data compiled regarding instructional strategies after the 2022-23 school year proved those strategies are extremely successful:

- Central Hardin High School, John Hardin High School and North Hardin High School students earned numerous accolades
- 87 HCS students earned an associate degree from Elizabethtown Community and Technical College through the HCS program
- 528 students earned Work Ethic Certification. The HCS Work Ethic Certification program is in its tenth year
- HCS seniors earned 5,509 college credit hours at ECTC
- 141 students earned a spot on the ECTC President's List
- 118 students earned a spot on the ECTC Dean's List
- Academy at EC3 students and Early College Pathway students earned a 3.54-grade point average
- 479 students passed a career end-of-program assessment or earned an industry certification in the 3rd year
- A video providing more details can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/hcsbythenumbers23vid>

It is no secret that there is a teacher shortage in Kentucky and across the United States. Hardin County Schools is providing an opportunity for its graduates to return to the district to teach.

Starting with the Class of 2023, HCS will provide up to \$350 per class for graduates from Central Hardin High School, John Hardin High School and North Hardin School who have been admitted and are in good standing in a post-secondary teacher education program. If students carry 15 hours of teacher education classes per semester, the HCS contribution could be as much as \$1750 and would cap at \$2100 (18 hours of education classes).

Should HCS graduates desire to become certified in middle school or high school mathematics or science, HCS will provide up to \$525 per class.

In return for the contribution, HCS and the graduate will enter a contractual agreement that will bring the HCS graduate back as an HCS teacher for at least three years.

“This ensures that we will employ the best and brightest teachers to educate our students by those who have a commitment to HCS and our community,” HCS Superintendent Teresa Morgan said. “We know that they will be tremendous because their foundation lies in the best school district in the Commonwealth. More importantly, our students will have great opportunities for success. These young men and women will bring the finest instructional strategies and implementation techniques to our classrooms.”

HCS graduates (effective with the Class of 2023) must provide proof they are enrolled in teacher education programs at any accredited post-secondary institution. However, the partnership between HCS and Western Kentucky University will pay even greater dividends for these graduates in question should they enroll at WKU.

WKU will match the HCS contribution. Therefore two-thirds of the tuition costs are covered for those not seeking certification in middle school or high school math and science and all of the tuition is covered for those who do seek certification in middle school or high school math and science. The HCS graduates must be admitted into and remain in good standing with the WKU College of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

“Hardin County Schools is paving an amazing road,” CEBS Dean Corrine Murphy said. “We are deeply engaged regarding strategies that seek to bring bright minds into the teaching profession and this initiative is certainly a first of its kind. I applaud Mrs. Morgan, the HCS staff and the Hardin County Board of Education for taking the necessary steps to help remedy this serious teacher shortage. HCS is securing its own destiny during these difficult times.”

A similar program is already in place for the district’s classified employees. The funds for both initiatives come to the district by way of a federal grant.

The Hardin County Board of Education gave all Hardin County Schools employees a two-percent raise in May 2023.

“The Hardin County Schools family works incredibly hard to ensure students succeed,” Board Chair Dawn Johnson said. “The Board knows that our staff members do great things every day in and out of the classroom. They deserve this increase. It gives us more opportunities to recruit and retain the best and brightest.”

A few other positions saw additional increases. Custodians, buildings and grounds staff and student transportation mechanics’ salaries have been raised to be even more competitive with similar jobs in the private sector.

Hardin County Schools' dedication to providing an evidence-informed education that prepares students for success in the real world has led it to earn the annual EVERFI Empowered Seal for two consecutive years.

The EVERFI Empowered Seal is a designation awarded to K-12 school districts and individual schools that have demonstrated an exemplary commitment to whole-child education through the use of EVERFI's comprehensive, evidence-informed digital programs.

These programs inform and empower students on critical issues including financial literacy, social-emotional learning, health and wellness, inclusion and college and career readiness. Educating the whole child not only impacts how healthy, engaged and productive students are during school but also their well-being and success far beyond the K-12 years.

HCS and the Hardin County Sheriff's Office have an initiative called "Digital Citizenship for Today's Kids" for Kindergarten through 12th-grade students.

"This partnership will allow students, their parents and our community to have a deeper understanding of how to communicate in today's digital world," Hardin County Sheriff John Ward said. "This age-appropriate curriculum will teach students that proper digital citizenship is important and that not everything you see and read is appropriate to share. Lessons also cover the effects of vaping, drug use, distracted driving, inappropriate phone apps and other dangers that children could find in today's dangerous world."

The curriculum is called Digital Futures Initiatives (DFI) and is supported by the National Association of School Resource Officers. It is developed for grades K-12 by teachers and SROs and helps children and families navigate through the avoidance of various societal dangers.

Woodland Elementary School has earned Purple Star Award Designation from the Kentucky Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities.

The Purple Star Program is part of the Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities' Strategies to strengthen the resiliency of Kentucky's military-connected youth and ensure that their social, emotional and academic needs are met.

The North Hardin High School Band received an invitation to play and march at the National Independence Day Parade on July 4, 2023 in Washington, D.C.

"This is a tremendous honor for our students," NHHS Director of Bands Kelsey Dunn said. "The North Hardin Band has a legacy of excellence and has played at some impressive venues and events - from Carnegie Hall to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. This invitation underscores the importance of our success and recognizes our students' hard work."

Bands are invited based on recommendations from each state's Governor's office. In a letter to Ms. Dunn, Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear states: "Your participation in the event illustrates not only your musical ability but also your perseverance and dedication to reaching your goals. The great commitment required from each member of your team is recognized and appreciated - and will be enjoyed by all who watch your performance on Independence Day."

Susan Duvall, a third-grade teacher at Lincoln Trail Elementary School, has the 2023 Hardin County Schools WHAS-11 ExCEL Award presented by LG&E KU.

"Mrs. Duvall is very passionate about learning and works diligently to advocate for the needs of each individual student," Lincoln Trail Elementary School Principal Kelly Miller said. "She carries a high level of professionalism among her colleagues and exhibits a positive attitude. She takes initiative in leadership among her grade-level team and ensures practices and decisions are based on the highest professional standards."

The superintendents of Hardin County Schools, Elizabethtown Independent Schools and LaRue County Schools collaborated to publish a letter intended for businesses that sell vaping products.

The letter asks those who sell vaping products to maintain the laws surrounding the sale of those materials and to consider placing those materials behind a counter.

"Growing problems are arising for young people who vape," the letter states. "These problems are becoming apparent within the walls of our schools. Children are starting to experiment with vaping and make a habit of vaping at younger ages than ever before. Children are finding ways to access vapes that are lined with extremely dangerous drugs like Fentanyl. Abuse of these products is leading to breathing problems, heart issues, mental fatigue, confusion, etc."

Kentucky Center for School Safety officials awarded Hardin County Schools and three law enforcement agencies with its School Resource Officer Promising Program Award.

KCSS Executive Director John Akers presented the award to officials from the Elizabethtown Police Department, the Radcliff Police Department and the Hardin County Sheriff's Office.

“You’re not just cops in the schools,” Akers said. “You’re highly trained. The partnership between Hardin County Schools and its law enforcement agencies is a role model for the rest of the state. I’m thrilled to present all of you with the KCSS Promising Programs Award.”

“You are always there for us,” HCS Director of Student Services Kim Adkins told a group of police officers. “You work so very well together to help our students, their families, our school staff and our community. We are extremely grateful for you all and all of you are deserving to receive this award.”

Hardin County Schools continued its tradition of honoring five graduates with HCS Distinguished Alumni Awards at a luncheon in September 2023.

Robin (Fulkerson) Boggs graduated from Central Hardin High School in 1997. She is the Deputy Chief of Staff for National Engagement at the National Security Agency (NSA) and is based in Fort Meade, Maryland. She has served in that capacity since January of this year.

Jason Booher, a member of the North Hardin High School Class of 1992, is the Superintendent of Mercer County (Kentucky) Schools. He has served in that role since the beginning of the 2021-22 school year. Vincent Holloway, a member of the North Hardin High School Class of 1980, is a vice president within Tetra Tech’s Federal IT Group. This role culminates over 38 years of leadership and technical experience in the United States Army and defense service industry as a senior business and technology executive.

Jeff Key is an East Hardin High School alum who graduated in 1985. He is currently the Vice President of United States Healthcare Systems for VERO Biotech. He also has successfully worked for The Medicines Company, Melina Therapeutics and La Jolla Pharmaceutical Company.

Monique Kuykendoll Quarterman graduated from John Hardin High School in 2007. She has served as the Executive Director of the Office for Entrepreneurship & Innovation for the Commonwealth of Kentucky (also known as KY Innovation) since 2022, which is an arm of the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development that enables a sustainable and active ecosystem for entrepreneurial thinkers throughout the state.

Additional Information

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

n/a

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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